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MUTUAL INFLUENCE

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A RE-VIEW OF RELIGION

BY

SIR FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND

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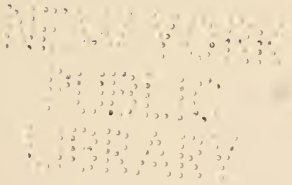
TO

OUR CHILDREN'S CHILDREN

I HOPEFULLY AND REVERENTLY DEDICATE

THIS BOOK



FOREWORD

In no times have men and women been more anxious for religion than they are now. They have a deep religious craving in their hearts, however little and seldom it may be outwardly manifest. But they have too—many of them—a sense of the inadequacy and insufficiency, the unreality and inappropriateness of much that is presented to them as their religion to-day. And they want something simpler, truer, more in touch with life and reality, and therefore great enough for the great times in which we live and for the great men with whom it is our privilege to work. They see and recognise that the religion which inspired the lives of men like Nelson, Lincoln, and Roberts, must have something in it of supreme value. And what is great and of value in it they would preserve as the most precious heritage of the race. But with the wider knowledge of things which they possess to-day, they see that there is much in the current religion which needs

to be eliminated and discarded ; and this wider knowledge which the labour of their predecessors has enabled them to possess, fills them with a sure conviction that through the process of elimination and by this closing with reality there will emerge for their children in generations to come a purer, a deeper, and a far more intimate and human religion than any which has gone before.

This purification and reconstruction of our religious beliefs must be the perpetual work of the greatest and noblest among us. And one who presumes to undertake the smallest portion of it must needs approach his task with humility and reverence. Yet if, in the full maturity of life and experience, he is convinced that revision is required, and believes he sees where and how it may be made, it would be shameful in him and disloyal to posterity not to speak.

Usually, indeed, it is not expected that a man of action should write on religion. But religion is the mainspring of action, and in action this book was conceived. It represents the views of one who was brought up in the old-fashioned religious beliefs and who still recognises the profound value of their inner core, but whose contact with life, especially with life among men of other faiths, and whose study of nature, incited by years spent among the grandest natural phenomena in the

world, has forced him to prove all things, to seek for truth from the highest authorities, personally as well as from their books, and to form his own conclusions. Those conclusions may or may not have value—and most certainly they do not claim finality, for truth about religion, as about everything else, must ever be growing and deepening. But they have not been formed in haste. They are the result of twenty-five years' most earnest search under conditions where it was possible continually to test them against the experiences of actual life. They will appear the merest commonplace to some, while others will regard them as dangerously new and subversive. But if the former have better expressed and more convincingly demonstrated what is herein so inadequately set forth, there is still the necessity to repeat and reiterate what they have said, and to put in a new way, and from a fresh point of view, the conclusions they have reached. And if the latter consider what is new is painful, it need only be said that in forming those conclusions regret has often come to the writer too, but that the pain speedily faded away in face of the higher glory which stood revealed, and which he would fain lead others also to see.

And, before all, he would wish to acknowledge his indebtedness to very many more than he

could enumerate, but especially—in order of time —to those leaders of a generation ago who first opened to him the great book of the Universe and showed him our true position in the world—to Darwin and Spencer, Haeckel and Huxley; and then to those present-day philosophers who, accepting all that science can affirm, have taught us to look deeper still and have revealed to us the truly real which lies at the back of all natural phenomena—to Bergson and Bradley, William James and James Ward. To those poet-prophets so opposite in nature, Nietzsche and Whitman, he is also deeply indebted. And, finally, to the personal friendship as well as to the works of—again in order of time — Sir Henry Newbolt, Dr Beattie Crozier, Hon. Bertrand Russell, Professor Sorley, and more particularly Dr J. E. M'Taggart, from whose books *Hegelian Cosmology* and *Some Dogmas of Religion* the central idea of the book was derived.

F. E. Y.

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MUTUAL INFLUENCE

CHAPTER I

INTEREST IN RELIGION

Most men, and particularly men of action, are deeply conscious of the presence of some Unseen Power at work in the world. In moments of crisis, and when the fate of a nation has depended on their action, they have felt themselves under an overpowering influence which has carried them high above all selfish desires, impelled them to do their utmost, and made them ready, without ever a thought, to sacrifice their lives for their country and for humanity, in order that justice, freedom, and righteousness may prevail. And what they have felt has filled them with the conviction that the Power makes for goodness ; they have wished, therefore, to work with it and have it working with them for what they are convinced must assuredly win in the end. As long as they do their best, and as long as they are ready to sacrifice all

they have to achieve the best, they are sure they will have this Power behind them, and that, having it behind them, they are working for what must, in the long run, inevitably be achieved.

All this may be seen in what to me is the most beautiful prayer, without any exception, which has ever been uttered, and which was written by Nelson immediately before going into action at Trafalgar :

" May the Great God whom I worship grant to my country, and for the benefit of Europe in general, a great and glorious victory ; and may no misconduct of anyone tarnish it. And may humanity after victory be the predominant feature in the British Fleet. For myself individually, I commit my life to Him who made me ; and may His blessing light upon my endeavours for serving my country faithfully. To Him I resign myself, and the just cause which is entrusted to me. Amen. Amen. Amen."

Men of the present day may not express themselves in the same way. Yet they may be no less really religious than Nelson. And I believe that the men of the future may be even more religious. They will have the same conviction of the justice of their cause, for they will refuse to take up causes which they do not consider just. They will be equally convinced that because their

cause is good it must infallibly win in the end. They will have the same unhesitating willingness to give their lives for their country; the same belief that their country's good, and the good of "Europe in general," are identical; the same broad humanity which looks upon the enemy as a human being, and worthy, therefore, of being treated as such. All these things, which are of the very essence of religion, they will have. And they will have, as a foundation to it all, the same sense of relationship with an Unseen Power which they know in their hearts does make for good. But their conception of the *nature* of that Power may be truer; and because it is truer their religion may have greater depth and intenser reality and fill a larger portion of their lives. It may, indeed, be that even now men are hungering for such a religion and that the momentous times in which we live may give it birth.

All is being tested in the fiery ordeal. Neither politics nor social life will be the same after the war as they were before. They will be purged of their dross till whatever is flimsy, unimportant, useless, will have been blighted away. And it will be the same with religion. In it, also, only what is of pure gold will remain. All those parts of our religious beliefs which are worn out, stale, flat, and unprofitable, will shrivel away before the

actualities of stern times like these. But the pure inner core of real truth which our religious beliefs contain will reveal itself all the more clearly, and men who have grown accustomed in these times to brush aside appearances and instinctively grasp realities will quickly seize on clear religious truth and thirstily absorb what hard experience has shown to be so vital for men's welfare.

Now it is a remarkable circumstance that our statesmen, in this greatest moment of our history, when the fate of the vastest Empire that men have ever had to guide was in their hands, and when they had to explain the position to their countrymen, to point out the dangers which lay before them and to indicate the objects they hoped to achieve, made scarcely any reference to such a Deity as might be regarded, in any true sense of the word, as an actual Person existing separate and apart from ourselves and controlling our destinies in the same way as an earthly sovereign exists and governs as a distinctly separate person. They may have spoken of the Deity in a figurative way as a Person, yet in reality, and half unwittingly, have meant the Spirit of Goodness working through the world, as they might speak of Britannia as a person, though all the time knowing that no such person existed and merely

meaning the spirit of Britain. But in this supreme crisis of our history, and when we are more anxious about our destiny than we have ever been before, and have stood in greater need of all the strength which we can secure, they did not, in their references to the Deity, give the impression of deliberately and definitely meaning us to go for help to any actual Person as distinct from ourselves, and as willing and able to help as an autocrat of this earth would be who was both powerful and good.

Yet, in these circumstances, statesmen would assuredly have urged the people to look to a Ruler like that for guidance and strength, if they had believed that such a Person actually existed, even if only as willing and really able to help us as we might conceive a wise and good Napoleon would be. And it was probably because, in such times as these, and in so grave a matter, men cannot afford to be anything else but truly real when face to face with their fellow-men, that they, unconsciously though instinctively, avoided the reference.

But it does not follow from this omission that they had no religion and no sense of being in the presence of some Good though Unseen Power. On the contrary, their speeches abound in religion; and they are the best evidence possible

of our statesmen feeling themselves under the influence of some mighty Invisible Power which they believed to be good. For we see even so powerful a man as the Prime Minister of England and his strongest colleagues being swept along by such a Power. They wished to do one thing—to maintain peace, but the "force of circumstances" and the "march of events" compelled them to do exactly the opposite—to declare war. Powerful as they were, by reason both of their office and of their personalities, there was something still more powerful exerting its influence on them. Their speeches, too, while full of a determination to defend the individuality of our nation and not permit it to be dominated by any other, are also filled with a consciousness of our close unity with our fellows and with a sense of necessity to act righteously. Self-interest is sometimes put forward, but our statesmen seem to have been aware that the appeal which would meet with the most ready response from the heart of the people was an appeal to their sense of honour and loyalty to their friends. There are also references to "the conscience of humanity" and to "the opinion of the world," and inferences that this conscience of humanity will approve the good, and that the good is what must assuredly come out victorious in the end.

Thus our statesmen must have had faith in the reality and truth of these beliefs, or they would not have put them forward at such a time as this. And they must have had faith also that the people really held them in their hearts, or they would not have been so sure—and, as the event proved, right in their assurance—that the people would gladly respond to such an appeal when made to them.

So there was, indeed, a very real recognition of a Spiritual Power working among men. There was a sense of the unity of men. There was a belief that things are making towards the good. And there was a conviction that it is our business to work in the same direction. There is, it would seem then, more religion among practical men than the scarcity of reference to the Deity would indicate. But there is an uncertainty of touch in dealing with this matter, and the better determination of the true nature of this Unseen Power, so active in the affairs of men, is a deep necessity of the times.

And what is of so much importance to the nation is of importance also to the whole race of men. And now is a peculiarly fitting moment for re-examining the time-honoured question and for making a nearer approach to its settlement. For

we should be beginning to realise what an overmastering force Man is becoming on this planet; how much he has so far effected; what illimitable possibilities lie before him; and how greatly his future will depend upon whether he regards himself as an insignificant animalcule controlled and guided by some Being in the Heavens or believes himself, and can with proper justification so believe himself, to be master of his own destiny, able to choose his own path and to pursue his own way along that path.

In the presence of awful natural calamities, great earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, famines, pestilence; or when viewing some stupendous natural object—the Ocean, a Himalayan Monarch, the Grand Canyon, or the Falls of Niagara—we are apt to dwell on our own insignificance in comparison. And still more insignificant do we appear when we look at the heavens through a powerful telescope and note the myriads of stars, each one of which is vastly larger than our earth, and each one of which may have planets revolving round it as our earth and other planets revolve round the sun. The individual man feels hopelessly small and trivial in the presence of these immensities. Yet the sun and all its planets, and all the other thousand million suns, with all their planets, and the highest mountains on the earth,

and every ocean, waterfall, and river, all put together, are neither so wonderful nor so great as a single human being, even the most humble.

It is man that is the marvel of the universe. And what in these days we have to realise is the part man is beginning to play. Regarded as one of the great forces at work on the planet, he is of immense but wholly unrecognised significance. Since he first appeared here, a quarter of a million or so of years ago, he has grown continually, and not only in numbers, but in quality and effectiveness. Looked at in the mass he has, without pause or break for a single hour, minute, or second, pursued his purpose of subduing nature to his will; of making the forces of nature subservient to his needs; of controlling the animals by exterminating what are dangerous, whether they be lions or microbes, and domesticating what are amenable and useful; of destroying what of plant life stands in his way, and cultivating and utilising what may help him; of tapping the natural energies in increasing measure; and by either stationary or mobile contrivances bridging rivers, continents, oceans, and the very air itself. Every year, by his accumulated knowledge and experience, as well as by his increase in numbers, man is becoming a force of greater significance and importance on the planet. And as he has existed on it only a

quarter of a million years, while there are many million of years yet before him, the importance of his determining what is the nature of that Unseen Power which so influences his actions is sufficiently apparent.

CHAPTER II

THE UNSEEN POWER

First we must make quite certain that such an Unseen Power really exists, and is not a matter of imagination or superstition. And that some tremendous Spiritual Power, infinitely stronger than himself, was working upon him, swaying his actions and profoundly affecting his life, no thoughtful man can doubt who reflects on his experiences in those stern days when the issues of war or peace were quivering in the balance. Who in those moments of high tension did not feel a mighty Power moving among men? Not one, be he Emperor, Chancellor, or Prime Minister, could have felt that he was firm on his own legs and wholly unaffected by a Power sweeping through the earth. Each strove his best to act in his own way, but each felt himself impelled along by this awesome Power so much stronger than the strongest individual. Some, as we have seen, called it the force of circumstances; others called it the march of events. But the most powerful of

men knew they were being forced along often in the very direction they were trying to avoid. Of the existence of a Spiritual Power immensely stronger than their individual selves they could not therefore doubt.

And what men felt and recognised in this great crisis and here in Europe is the same as what men at all times and in every part of the world have also felt and recognised. To a traveller, and to anyone who has had the handling of men of different races, and of leading them in critical times, nothing is more remarkable than the prevalence, in all parts of the world, and among all classes and races of men, of the conviction that we are under the influence of some invisible Power whom we must perforce regard with the deepest reverence and awe. Men differ diametrically as to the nature of the Power, but that it exists and operates in our own lives few would really doubt. In the newest countries as in the oldest—in California as in India ; in the most barbarous as in the most civilised—in Matabeleland as in France ; the traveller may see edifices erected for the worship of this Power. In taking a comprehensive view of the world nothing stands out more impressively. Looking at our own little England alone, what is more significant than this

tangible and visible fact, that in each small village and in every tiny hamlet, as well as in the largest town, is a beautiful Church which is incomparably the noblest building in the place ?

Throughout Europe the same observation might be made. And so also is it in every part of Asia. Every town and village has its mosque or temple. And in the New World as in the Old, each latest township erects its building where men may gather together for the worship of this mysterious Power which so profoundly affects their lives.

And besides these material and tangible evidences of man's belief in a Power whom he must regard with respect, personal contact with men of different races all the world over will reveal equally trustworthy testimony. Especially in the face of some great natural calamity—a famine, an earthquake, or pestilence,—or when afflicted by some grievous personal loss, do we find men and women, of every nationality and of every grade of civilisation or society, impressed with the conviction that their destinies and lives are at the mercy of some dread Power which they cannot see but which they feel to be ever operating in their lives.

We may then start on this as a well-established fact, that a man is under the influence of some

Invisible Power vastly stronger than himself. But it does not follow from this that the Power, though invisible, must necessarily be exercised by a supernatural Being as most men have hitherto supposed. It may be that none of the influences which a man feels continually raining upon him, or the sum total of the whole of them, issue from any Person external to man and to physical nature; but that they all issue from other men, present and past, or from the animal and plant world and physical nature. It may be that the individual man and his fellow-men, and all plant and animal life, and physical nature form one connected whole, all the parts of which are related to and mutually influence one another, but outside of and beyond which whole there is no separate Being who originally created it and who now guides and controls it.

It is this latter view of the nature of the Unseen Power which philosophy is inclined to adopt; and its reasonableness will be more apparent if some illustrative examples are given of the way in which a Power may profoundly influence the individual members of a group and yet all the time be resident in the members themselves and not be exercised by any outside Being; though, for convenience' sake, that Power may often be referred to by the members of the group as if it were

really a separate Person. And I hope that these examples will help to make clear the view I suggest, that in referring to God as if He were a Being wholly outside of and separate from us men, and from the animals, plants, and physical nature, we are, without exactly recognising it, merely personifying that Power exerted by the Mutual Influence of the self-active parts of the Universe upon one another, whether those parts be men or atoms, animals or plants, rocks or planets; and between which Power and these parts there is a further mutual influence the one upon the other.

And when this is realised in all its manifold implications, the grand conception will dawn upon Man that he has a share, and an increasingly important share, in the humanising and bettering of that very Power which yet goes to the making of himself; that he is, indeed, the greatest known contributor to this Power. We shall see that Man is Creator as well as created—creature of the Past but Creator of the Future. We shall see, further, that whether he creates the Future well or ill depends upon himself, and upon himself alone.

CHAPTER III

A POWER FROM WITHIN

We may take first the familiar subject of Public Opinion, and use it as an example of a Power which acts with undeniable force upon individual men, but which is not outside of and does not exist apart from men as a whole. Public Opinion profoundly influences the life of an individual. It follows him wherever he is. It presses upon him from all sides at all times. It is never and nowhere absent from him. Even if he retires into the deepest seclusion it is still there criticising this very action of retiring from his fellow-men. And so also in his most private moments and in his most secret actions he continually feels its presence waiting in judgment upon him. From the influence of Public Opinion for good or bad he can never escape. It may favour or it may condemn him. It may be hard or may be merciful. It may be right or it may be wrong. But it will always be there, pressing with tremendous effect upon him.

And yet we know that the force of Public Opinion, so potent and so ubiquitous as it is, is not a Power outside men altogether. It is, indeed, a Power which men themselves create. The very individual upon whom it is acting so forcefully himself contributes to its making. And every single other individual takes his share, whether he wishes to or no, in the shaping of Public Opinion.

And Public Opinion is not something which simply exists. It is no stationary thing. It is something which is constantly changing and being re-formed and re-created. It must have originated in the simplest beginnings with the first appearance of men upon the earth, and grown ever since. The instance of American Public Opinion will give us some idea of how it must have originated and developed. Up to 1492 there was no such thing as American Public Opinion, though its germs must have been latent in the breasts of those Dutchmen and Englishmen who were shortly to settle there. With their first landing it may be said to have taken its birth. And since then it has continually and without break grown in volume, till now it is one of the great factors in the shaping of the human race. It has its effect, for instance, upon how we deal with Ireland,

and is not without its influence so far afield as India. Even the Germans are anxious to obtain its support. And yet it is different in many important respects from the Public Opinion which has all the time been developing in the countries from which Americans originated ; and American Public Opinion would not tolerate things to which British Public Opinion takes no exception, and accepts others which would be altogether distasteful in England.

And while Public Opinion thus grows and changes, it is noticeable that it is something which existed before any of the present individuals who exercise it came into being, and which will continue in operation long after they have all ceased to exist. It was there ready to exert its influence upon present living men directly they were born, and it will persist to influence other individuals after all present men are dead. It will profoundly modify and affect each living individual. And generation after generation it will go on moulding and shaping individuals. To that extent it will transcend and be separate and distinct from particular individuals. Yet all the time these very individuals will be forming the Public Opinion ; and if *all* individual men ceased to exist, Public Opinion would also come to an end.

In what we call "public opinion" we thus see

an instance of an invisible power of great strength, of wide, deep, and unceasing import on the action of men, which yet is not exercised by any external Being apart from them, but only by men themselves. It is a Power, in a sense outside any particular individual, though every single individual contributes to it, but not outside humanity as a whole. It will outlive all living men, but if all mankind were swept away it also would cease to exist. I go to form it and it goes to form me. I shall pass away, but it will endure—but endure with my impress, however slight, ineffaceably stamped upon it ; and it will endure only so long as humanity also endures.

We may take another instance to illustrate the same point. We speak of "France" or "England" as if they were real beings, as if they were actual persons exercising power. And we make representations of them, draw pictures, and erect statues of "England" and "France" as if such persons really existed. We depict a gracious, beautiful Woman to represent "France" ; and figures of Britannia and of John Bull to represent "England." And we talk of the sons of "France," of Englishmen loving "England," and of "England" loving her sons. And it is no mere figure of speech we use when we thus

speak of the love of Englishmen for "England," and of "England" for Englishmen. This love is a fact of great significance and importance, and a hard and solid feature in human affairs. If an Englishman is killed in far-off Mexico, even if he is utterly unknown and has not been in his native country for years, "England" will own him as her son, show the utmost indignation at his murder, and seek reparation for the crime. And if an Englishman serves and loves her as Nelson did, even to the sacrifice of his life for her good, then nothing can exceed the love she will give him, and give his memory for generations after. The love which Queen Victoria gave to "England" and which "England" gave to her is another testimony to the reality of this love. And "England" can not only show love to those who serve her well: she can also give forth her wrath upon those who do not come up to the standard she demands. If a public man fails in honour or in courage she will condemn him, not pitilessly indeed, for she has mercy as well as wrath, but decisively and unmistakably.

But when we thus speak of "England," loving and being loved, of her showing anger and mercy, of her watchful eye and strong arm, we know that this "England" is no real separate person apart from Englishmen. The love and the anger and

the mercy are real. But the "England" who shows these qualities is not a separate person, with eyes and arms, but a spirit emanating from individual Englishmen. When Nelson loved "England," he loved the spirit which resides in and issues from all Englishmen. He loved that for which the whole of the individual Englishmen stand. And when "England" loved him it was no separate Being, such as we figure in Britannia, which loved him, but the hearts of all Englishmen. And when "Germany" hates "England" and "England" hates "Germany," there are no distinct persons adopting this undesirable attitude towards one another, but the respective embodiments of the spirit of all Germans and of all Englishmen.

So in the case of "France" or "England" or "Germany," as of "public opinion," we have instances of a Power which greatly affects the lives of men but which yet is not separate from men but is, on the contrary, actually created by them. The personification of "France" and "England" is only a convenience of speech, and we know very well that no such person as Britannia really exists. And in like manner it is possible that in personifying the Spirit of the Universe as "God" we should beware of believing that any such person

in truth exists. "God" may, like "France," or "England," be no actual person but simply the Spirit which animates the whole and emanates from the members.

The foregoing instances have been taken from the common speech of men. But science itself is also apt to objectify as if it were an outside power that which really issues from the things themselves. Thus she speaks of "forces" and "laws" and "causes" as if there were something or somebody separate from the things themselves which exerted these "forces," enacted these "laws," and initiated these "causes." But nothing is more noteworthy than the way in which scientific men are correcting this habit and, almost unconsciously, using terms which attribute activity to the individuals and not to any external force. It is recognised that while such expressions as "laws," "forces," and so on were useful in the early stages of a science as best exemplifying to the mind what was observed to take place, they are altogether misleading, and out of place in the maturity of a science, if they give rise to the idea that there is any entity external to the things themselves acting upon them, that is to say, if it is thought that the things are inert and are pushed and pulled by some Power outside themselves.

When we see a dust eddy rising on the high road and the particles of dust being whirled aloft in a moving spiral, we look upon those particles of dust as inert and as being acted on by an external Power, the wind, which has stirred them, collected them, and swept them upward. We have in our mind on the one hand inert things which, without the application of some external influence, would remain stationary and immobile, and on the other hand an external power which, though invisible, produces motion among these hitherto motionless particles, and sweeps them this way and that at its own pleasure, so to speak. And we are apt to think of the whole of physical nature in a similar way, that is to say, as if there were inert particles on the one hand, and an external, though invisible, Power on the other—a personal Creator or Artificer.

But there is reason to think that this is not a right conception of the Universe ; and the truth seems to lie in a precisely opposite notion. Individual particles of matter are indeed swept along in great gusts, but these do not come from outside like the gusts of wind which produced the dust eddy : they are produced by the particles themselves, as the gusts which sweep through an assemblage of men and carry them up to heights of enthusiasm come from the individual members.

Taking first the expression "force" and using, as an exemplification of its employment, the force of gravity, we shall see that if we imagine that there is anything external to natural bodies acting upon them from outside we have been completely misled by the use of the term "force." What really happens is that the material bodies *mutually gravitate* towards each other. If the Universe consisted of only one material body there would be no force of gravity to pull it this way and that. But the Universe consists of innumerable material bodies, and these mutually gravitate towards each other. Gravity, according to Sir Oliver Lodge, is a property appertaining to all material bodies, certainly to atoms, and possible even to electrons. It must surely depend, he says, on something constitutional and deeply embedded in the very existence of the ultimate units of matter. Similarly, Professor Soddy says :[1] "It is a universal attribute of matter that it gravitates. It used to be assumed that all matter attracted other matter with a force which was termed the force of gravity. But no such force really exists. Matter merely executes motions in space, which are what they would be supposing the force of gravity obeying the law of gravitation did exist." Why material bodies gravitate towards each other is

[1] *Matter and Energy*, p. 106.

unknown, though not necessarily unknowable. All we know is that in virtue of this property of gravitation which they possess they tend to move toward each other at a certain calculable rate. Those who elaborated the fundamental doctrines of Newton regarded forces as real pushings and pullings between bodies, but modern critics have reinstated the notion in its proper position as "a mathematical fiction," and, according to Mach, Newton used the notion of force consciously and deliberately, merely as a conceptual instrument for "the investigation and transformed statement of actual facts."[1]

So also is it in the case of the force of chemical affinity. Atoms of matter are regarded as attracting or repelling one another with the force of chemical affinity. But what really happens is that they mutually tend to approach or move away from one another, and if no obstacle stands in the way, do so move. They spontaneously draw together or draw apart. There is nothing outside them pulling them or pushing them. The truth is, says Professor Soddy, that all so-called forces are positional, and due to the relative positions of the bodies.

The force of gravity, like the force of Public Opinion, is something which emanates from the

[1] Dr Percy Nunn, *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society.*

individual units themselves. It is the result of those units fulfilling their own inherent needs. And the force which acts upon each is merely the force of the mutual influence which individual units exert upon one another. "Force is merely the name for the influence by which any portion of matter tends to alter the direction of the motion of any other portion."

And as the forces of nature are not anything exerted from outside by some such entity as nature, so the natural laws also are not imposed from outside but issue from the units themselves. The laws of nature are not laid down by any external authority, as the Indian peasant would think the laws under which he is governed are made by the King-Emperor. The Universe is a self-governing concern. It makes its own laws as it goes along. And the natural laws, so called, are really nothing more than the highest generalisation we have yet been able to make of our observations of nature. They are empirical generalisations. "In speaking of natural laws," says Professor Ostwald, "we think of a law-maker who has ordained that things should be as they are and not otherwise ; but the intellectual history of the origin of the laws of nature shows that here the process is quite a different one ; the laws of nature do not

decree what shall happen, but inform us what has happened and what is wont to happen. Things have been so until now, therefore we expect that they will be so in future."

Again, in the use of the expression "cause," science is becoming aware of the danger of conveying the impression that some outside Power produces or creates the cause. For convenience we speak of "causes," and insensibly we come to think that they must have some objectivity and be traceable back to some "First Cause," which would scarcely be anything else than a Person capable of acts of will. But in the advanced sciences, such as gravitational astronomy, says Mr Bertrand Russell in a paper "On the Notion of Cause," read before the Aristotelian Society, the word "cause" never occurs. There are, he says, no such things as causes, and the law of causality is a relic of a bygone age. His argument is that between a cause and an effect there must be a time-interval. That interval may be excessively small, but it must exist nevertheless. Putting a penny into the slot of an automatic machine may be spoken of as the cause of the effect, the appearance of the ticket; but in between the putting in of the penny and the appearance of the ticket there must be some

slight interval of time, and in that interval an earthquake may occur and the ticket after all never make its appearance. So, points out Mr Russell, to be sure of the expected effect we must know that there is nothing in the environment to interfere with it; and this means that the supposed cause is not, by itself, adequate to ensure the effect, and as soon as the antecedents have been given sufficiently fully to enable the consequent to be calculated with some exactitude, the antecedents have become so complicated that it is very unlikely they will ever recur. These considerations may, he hopes, remove the analogy with human volition which makes the conception of cause such a fruitful source of fallacies.

As a case in point he takes the motions of mutually gravitating bodies and says that in them there is nothing that can be called a cause, and nothing which can be called an effect; there is merely a formula. There is no question of repetitions, of the "same" cause producing the "same" effect; it is not in any sameness of cause and effect that the constancy of scientific laws consists, he urges, but in the sameness of relations. And even "sameness of relations," he adds, "is too simple a phrase; sameness of differential equations is the only correct phrase."

The instance of Public Opinion and of "France" and "England" will have served as illustrations of the way in which a Power may act upon individuals and yet be created and exerted by the very individuals upon which it acts; and the meaning which scientific men are now seeing they must attach to the terms "forces," "laws," "causes," indicates that in examining the Universe they too are driven to give up using expressions which convey the idea of things being acted upon by any power wholly external to them, and have to explain that what they observe is simply the mutual interaction of these self-active things themselves.

And having thus set forth the conception of philosophy to which I wish to draw attention, namely, the conception of a Power created by the Mutual Influence of self-active entities upon one another within a whole outside of which no other Power exists, I would now give the grounds there are for believing that the Power under which men have felt themselves, and which they have named God, is a Power of this nature, resident in and proceeding from themselves and the physical world from which they have sprung, but not in or proceeding from any Being external to these.

CHAPTER IV

THE NATURE OF THINGS

If, with the eyes of the highest scientific authorities, we look into the bottom of things and try to discover what they really are, we find that they are wholly different from what they seem. We might be prepared to expect that they would differ much from their appearance; but we would hardly have supposed that they would prove to be the directly opposite. Yet such will prove to be the case. When we are standing on a hard granite rock we seem to be on something in the highest degree tangible, endurable, motionless, the very exemplar of all that is meant by solidity and immobility. And yet science shows that what seems so solid and immobile is, in reality, an aggregate of countless particles each of infinitesimal parvitude, and composed, not, as we should think, of something hard and tangible, but, on the contrary, of what is entirely "immaterial," intangible, imponderable, ethereal, and each circling with a velocity which would leave the fastest rifle

bullet simply standing. We should find further that a piece of rock no larger than what we might take up between our fingers contains energy enough, if we only knew how to get at it, to drive the *Mauretania* several times across the Atlantic and back. The activity and the spontaneity of activity, the energy and the "immateriality" of the final units of matter—these are the points that strike us.

The whole material world, so called, whether it be rocks or plants, our own bodies, or the most distant stars, is all built up of atoms. And the atoms had, until recent years, been considered hard, solid, and unchangeable. But the experiments and researches of Sir Joseph Thomson and others have forced us to discard the old idea, and the atom is now believed to consist of a nucleus of positive electricity surrounded by a system of negative electrons probably rotating in rings, a complex planetary system in which the negative electrons and the form of positive electricity revolve about each other with enormous speed.

Not the atom, therefore, but the electron is the ultimate particle of matter at which science has so far arrived. And these electrons are of a minuteness beyond all possible conception. Even an atom is unimaginably minute, but an electron is a thousandfold minuter still. Sir Oliver Lodge

puts it down as of the order 10^{-13} centimetre in diameter, that is, $\frac{1}{10,000,000,000,000}$ of a centimetre. If the earth, he says, represented an electron, an atom would occupy a sphere with the sun as centre and four times the distance of the earth as radius.

The excessive minuteness is one point to notice about the electron ; another is the tremendous speed at which it is incessantly revolving, a speed which would take it three or four times round the earth in a second.

But when we come to examine what the electron actually consists of, we find that it is no gritty, tangible speck of matter, however minute, but is a disembodied charge of electricity without any material nucleus. It is simply a centre of energy, or, as some physicists believe, a minute whirl or vortex analogous to a gyroscope in the bosom of that hypothetical ether which science assumes to be the fundamental element in the Universe, which holds the whole together and which forms the connecting medium between every separate part, be it remotest star on the confines of space or a minute electron.

But minute though these electrons are, and as small in comparison with the whole atom as a fly is in a church, and few in number in each atom though they are, yet they are so exceedingly

forceful and energetic, revolving round and round with such stupendous velocity as to give the impression that the atom is a solid incompressible body. So it is these energetic little particles which, in their mutual relations, constitute what we call the atom of matter, says Sir Oliver Lodge. They give it its inertia; they enable it to cling on to others which come within short range, with the force which we call cohesion; and by the excess or defect of one or more constituents they exhibit chemical properties and attach themselves with vigour to others in like or rather opposite case.

Such are the ultimate particles of matter of which the whole Universe is composed. Of these immaterial vortices or centres of energy are built up the thousand million stars, the sun, the planets, this earth and all that is upon it, the plants, the animals, and all us men, the lowest and the highest. We and all things else are made of these electrons formed into atoms, of these atoms formed into groups, of these groups made up into systems, of systems of systems, and so on. And electrons of all the elements and in every part of the Universe are precisely and exactly like each other.

Two points in this examination of the funda-

mental constituents of which the Universe is built up have to be particularly observed : firstly, their immateriality, and, secondly, their mobility. Even if we were able with some marvellous microscope actually to see an electron, and if we had the means of taking one up between our fingers and of touching and feeling it, we should find that it utterly evaded both our sight and touch, because of its "immateriality," because it is nothing hard, solid, and tangible, however minute it might be, but simply a vortex of imponderable ether, a mere centre of energy. And what ether is, and what energy is, beyond mere convenient expressions, no man can yet say.

Their "immateriality" is the first point to note about the fundamental units of matter, and the second is their mobility. They are never at rest. They are in incessant motion. And the speed with which they move is literally lightning speed, a rapidity which would take them round the earth in less than half a second. With this tremendous velocity they revolve round and round the atom, and when they are free, as in the emissions from radium, they dart through space with the same lightning speed.

Now if the ultimate particles are thus in unceasing motion, we should be inclined to infer that

they must be acted upon by some external influence, as the wind which raises a dust eddy acts upon the particles of dust. We should be disposed to think of some invisible Power working through the Universe upon these ultimate particles and driving them this way and that, as the wind drives the specks of dust. And when we discover, as scientific men by observation have discovered, that while to all appearance the movements of these particles are as madly chaotic as the movements of the individual members of a crowd appear from the summit of a high tower, they are in reality strictly regular and in order—strictly in accordance with the laws of motion—we should be inclined to infer that the external influence which was acting upon them must be more purposeful than the gust of wind which raises the dust eddy and must proceed from some Mind.

Nevertheless this is not the only inference which must of necessity be drawn from the facts, and another inference has been made by philosophers and scientific men which seems to fit them better. The ultimate particles of matter are always in motion, it is true, but, as we have seen, these particles are not the inert grossly material entities that we have commonly imagined them to be. They are full of energy—they may indeed be

nothing but energy—and they are possessed of certain properties in virtue of which they act in definite ways. They have, in fact, a certain amount of spontaneity. Within specific limits they may be said to act of their own free will, as it were. They behave in a particular manner. They are self-active.

Thus the nature of the negative electrons is such that they will tend to dart away with lightning speed from all other negative electrons, and will do so unless prevented. But their nature is also such that they will tend to move with no less speed toward a positive electron. And all material bodies are of such a nature that they tend to mutually gravitate towards each other. They possess this attribute of mutual gravitation.

What science affirms then, is, that all particles of matter act as they do because of, and in virtue of, certain properties with which they are themselves endowed. Science does not think it necessary to suppose that any outside Power intervenes. It holds that the simplest particles have properties of their own, properties in virtue of which they act in certain definite ways and mutually influence each other.

It may be argued that if this be so then some High Being from outside must have endowed

the particles with these properties in virtue of which they act. It may be said that these properties must have been placed there by someone; that they could not have come into being of themselves. But then it might fairly be asked who endowed the outside High Being with powers to endow the particles of matter with the properties we observe them to possess. And we are at once led into an endless regression from whence there seems no possibility of escape. Therefore it seems as simple to assume that particles of matter were endowed with certain attributes as to assume that some Higher Being was so endowed, and the one seems a more natural assumption than the other. And the thing is perhaps more comprehensible if we consider how difficult it is to avoid regarding even the simplest particles of matter as anything else than spiritual, for scientific men themselves are driven to use such terms as their "behaviour," "mutual influence," "mutual relationship," "mutual gravitation"—all implying something of spirit even in the fundamental units of matter.

And this additional point will perhaps be a further help, that when science speaks of the particles of matter as being possessed of certain properties, she recognises that no particle of matter exists or has ever existed in isolation. The

particles are always connected with one another to form a whole ; and it is in their mutual relations with one another that their properties emerge. Motion would never occur if a particle existed in complete isolation, that is if the Universe consisted of only one particle ; for motion is merely a relation between moving bodies. Each particle—in some infinitesimal degree—is affected by all the rest. Each minutest unit influences and is influenced by all the others. The myriad particles of matter thus form a connected whole. Each individual particle is a social individual and not an isolated individual. There is interaction and inter-relationship between all the parts so as to form a whole, and each is affected by the Power resulting from the Mutual Influence of all the parts upon one another, as each member of Society is affected by the Public Opinion which yet emanates from each. The intimacy of the union between these parts may have been very slight in the first instance, but there was always unity of some kind ; and it is sometimes held that by the very necessity of things there must have been such unity.

And as there is this unity, however slight it may be at the start, this may account for the order and regularity which are observed ; for the moving particles have to conduct themselves

within a closed system, and in seeking a *modus vivendi* it may possibly be the case that they simply have to settle down to regular habits. If there is unity it seems impossible that there should be a real chaos.

Our fundamental conception would not then be of an Artificer on the one side and a pile of inert bricks on the other ; but one of energetic individuals forming themselves into a whole by their own activities and working out for themselves the laws under which those activities can be conducted.

And so we gain an impression, at the lowest end of the scale, of a Universe in incessant flux, excessively mobile and plastic, and composed of parts which, infinitesimally minute though they be, are intensely active. We hold an impression of an association of immensely active members mutually influencing one another. We find neither inertness nor isolation, but the very opposite—incessant activity and intimate relationship.

This is what science has to teach us, and at this low stage we can find no room for the intervention of any outside Power. The observed effects are produced by the interaction of the parts upon one another. The individual atom

is affected by something, but that something is not any Power external to the atoms : it is what the other atoms themselves exert. The Power which the individual atoms feel is the Mutual Influence which they exercise upon another.

CHAPTER V

THINGS IN PROCESS

But things are not merely in motion : they are also in process—in process, as we shall see some grounds for believing, of development towards the better. The fundamental units of matter not only move here and there on a dead level ; they rise into the air, as it were ; they form themselves into groups, and groups of groups, in ever more complex association, from which higher and higher attributes emerge. Stage by stage, from the most nebulous nebula, and from the hottest stars, to stars such as our sun, and on still further to this earth, and similarly in parallel stages in our laboratories, the process from its remotest beginnings may be observed under our very eyes. The telescope and spectroscope in the observatory and the microscope in the laboratory, and both supplemented by the mathematical genius of man, reveal the initial stages, from the single separate units to couples, and triplets, and couples of couples, and couples of triplets, and triplets of

triplets, and so on, step by step, in continually growing complexity, and giving rise to higher and higher attributes. While some electrons always remain free, others coalesce into atoms. While in some atoms only one or two electrons have coalesced, in other atoms six or seven or more, up to a hundred, may have grouped themselves together. While some atoms remain single, other atoms coalesce in groups of two or three or several atoms, and the property of chemical affinity emerges which keeps those groups together.

This is the account which science gives of those exceedingly important initial stages in the world's process. And if we now go beyond the province of pure science and ask ourselves what it was that initiated these initial stages, brought about the process, made things rise from the level, we shall be tempted again to infer that some outside mind must have designed and planned and thought out the lines of development, and that some unseen hand must have brought the units together in groups and given the uplift. And when we find higher properties are emerging than were there at the start in the initial separate units, we are naturally inclined to think that someone must have put them there. It seems to us so obvious that nothing higher can emerge than was

there to begin with, that we are apt to jump to the conclusion that someone outside already possessing those attributes must have deliberately placed them in the new groupings. When the new property of chemical affinity suddenly arises from units of matter which did not display it before they were grouped together, it would seem obvious that some outside person must have designedly endowed the atom with this property in fulfilment of some planned-out scheme of his own.

Yet philosophy does not accept this as the only inference which may be made. Instead of there being an outside Personal agency to produce the uplift which we observe, it may be embedded in the very constitution of the things themselves that they should so rise. And we may find the clue to the enigma in the circumstance which we have just observed, namely, that things are never in isolation ; that neither the fundamental units of matter nor their most complex groupings lie about in mere juxtaposition to one another, inert and characterless and unrelated to or uninfluenced by the rest, but that each is a centre of energy with properties of its own, related to and under the influence of all the others to form one interconnected whole, so that they are all and always in mutual relationship and mutually influencing one another.

Another consideration of scarcely less significant import is that the mutual influence between the units itself grows and develops as higher attributes accrue to the groupings. The power of the mutual influence, like the power of Public Opinion, must act with great force upon individual units. But these individuals will affect the power as individual men affect Public Opinion. There will thus be—and this is the point—a mutual influence not only between all the individuals and one another, but also between the individuals and their mutual influence. The ultimate particles by their interaction create the power of their mutual influence. This power reacts again upon the movements of the individual particles. The particles in their new attitude would create a reformed mutual influence. This would react again upon the particles. And so the process would go on, as in the formation of Public Opinion by individual men, and in the changes which Public Opinion would affect in individuals and their groupings, and to which these again would give rise in Public Opinion.

It may be that it is under the pressure of this double action of the mutual influence of the parts upon one another, and of the parts upon their own mutual influence, that a process results, simplest and most elementary particles of ma

never merely lying alongside each other, isolated from and unrelated to one another, but always connected in a unity. It may be that inherent in this unity from the very first there was an imperative urge and necessity for closer and closer intimacy of union—for greater and still greater stability. In the whole there may have been just this property which none of the single constituents by themselves possessed—the property in virtue of which the parts would be driven to form themselves into a higher unity, a closer intimacy of union, a more stable equilibrium.

And this is what science, in her gropings into the foundation of things, believes is taking place. The ultimate particles in their mad hurryings find greater stability when coalescing together in couples and triplets, and so on, than in remaining single. They insensibly, therefore, so group themselves. For however stupendously large the system is which we know as the Universe, it is a closed system, and the component members must ever be seeking the best possible *modus vivendi*.

If the Universe consisted only of negative electrons they would mutually repel each other, that is, they would tend to move away from each other, and would so move, darting from each other, with the speed of light, to the confines of

space. That they do not so move is evidence of the resistance of positive electricity holding them back. The form in which this positive electricity occurs in the atom is a matter about which we at present have very little information. But in default of exact knowledge of the nature of the way in which positive electricity occurs in the atom, Sir Joseph Thomson considers a case in which the positive electricity is distributed in the way most amenable to mathematical calculation, *i.e.* when it occurs in a sphere of uniform density throughout which the electrons are distributed. And he then shows how the positive electricity attracts the corpuscles (electrons) to the centre of the sphere, while their mutual repulsion drives them away from it, so that when in equilibrium they will be distributed in such a way that the attraction of the positive electrification is balanced by the repulsion of the other corpuscles (electrons), and he shows that when there is only one electron it will evidently go to the centre of the sphere.

We have now reached the stage in which there are a number of spheres of positive electricity, each sphere with an electron embedded at its centre. These have to find a *modus vivendi* among themselves. And Sir J. J. Thomson shows that the arrangement with two electrons inside one sphere is more stable than an arrangement where there

are two spheres with an electron inside each.[1] So if we had a number of single electrons each inside its own sphere, they would not be so stable as if they were to coagulate and form systems each containing more than one electron. There would therefore be a tendency for a large number of systems containing single corpuscles to form more complex systems—that is on the assumption that the size of the sphere of positive electrification for this system containing single electrons is the same as that of the spheres containing only one corpuscle. And on the same assumption the arrangement with three electrons inside one sphere is more stable than three single electrons each inside its own sphere, or than one sphere and two corpuscles inside another sphere : thus again the tendency would be towards aggregation, though, if the positive electricity, instead of being invariable in size, were invariable in density, the tendency would be for the complex systems to dissociate with the simpler ones. And this process of dissociating does, as a matter of fact, occur along with the process of association.

So far then as we are able to judge, it is an effort after stability which gives rise to the more complex forms. The innumerable and varying

[1] *The Corpuscular Theory of Matter*, p. 105.

units are trying to find the means of living most comfortably with one another ; and many of them find, through a course of hard practical experience and by a process of trial error, that they get on better in couplets or triplets than they do by living singly. In some such way as this, we may conjecture, rather than through the intervention of any exterior Person, the ultimate particles of matter were formed into atoms, the atoms into molecules, and so on.

Nor need we suppose that the new attributes which emerge during the greater complication of the groupings must have been specially placed by any outside agency. The result seems to flow naturally from the inner working of the Process. We have seen the electrons grouping themselves together in spheres. And as the number of electrons inside the sphere increases they will tend to break up into new formations. "We find," says Sir J. J. Thomson,[1] "that in a symmetrical atom only a limited number of electrons can be in equilibrium when arranged on a single spherical surface concentric with the atom. When the number of electrons exceeds the critical number, the electrons break up into two or more groups arranged in a series of concentric shells. Layers

[1] Romanes Lecture, 1914.

of electrons will be formed like the layers of an onion. But there cannot be more than a certain number of electrons in any one layer ; and as the population of electrons in an atom increases the number in the outer layer will at first increase, but when it has reached the critical number no more can be added to it, and any now added to the atom will begin to form a new outer layer, and the old outer layer becomes an inner one. The electrons in the outside layer will be held in their places less firmly than those in the inner layers ; they are more mobile, and will arrange themselves more easily under the forces exerted upon them by the atoms. As the force which one atom exerts on another depends on the rearrangement of the electrons in the atom, the force which a neutral atom exerts on other atoms, what we may call the social qualities of the atom, will depend mainly on the outer belt of electrons. Now these forces are the origin of chemical affinity, and of such physical phenomena as surface tension, cohesion, intrinsic pressure, viscosity, ionising power, in fact of by far the most important properties of the atom ; and the most interesting part of the atom is the outside belt of electrons. As this belt will be pulled about and distorted by the proximity of other atoms, we should expect that the properties depending on the outer layer of the

electrons would not be carried unchanged by an atom through all its compounds with other elements; they will depend upon the kind of atom with which this atom is associated in these compounds; they will be what the chemists call constitutive, and not intrinsic. On the other hand, the electrons in the strata nearer the centre of the atom will be much more firmly held; they will require the expenditure of much more work to remove them from the atom, and will be but little affected by the presence of other atoms, so that such properties as depend upon these inner electrons will be carried unchanged by the atom into its chemical compounds. The properties of the real atoms are in accordance with these suggestions. By far the larger number of the properties of atoms are of the constitutive type which we have associated with the outer belt of electrons. There are, however, as we have seen, other properties of the atom which are intrinsic to it; these we associate with the inner layer of electrons."

This is a pronouncement made only last year by the man who knows most about the fundamental materials and the initial stages of the World-Process. Given the ultimate units as of such a nature and so related to one another, and he shows how, without any need of intervention

from outside, more complex groupings arise, and how from these groups higher attributes emerge. We have to start with something as the ground for the whole World-Process. We cannot base it on nothing, on mere air and emptiness. But as we have found the primordial units to be not inert and characterless, as we may have supposed, but spontaneously active ; and as we have further discovered that they are not completely isolated and separate from each other, but intimately related to and influencing one another, we are not compelled to assume as this ground a Perfect Being over against piles of material like heaps of grains of sand ; but can, instead, start with these energetic little entities and their active spirit, and, seeing how closely related they are to one another, leave them to work out their own salvation, and be sure that out of the battlings and the affinities, the oppositions and the attractions, and the necessity of carrying on all these activities within a limited space, higher groupings and their correspondingly higher attributes must inevitably arise.

Leaving the examination of the initial stages, and viewing the world as a whole, we again realise that it is a process—a process in endless movement without ever a pause or break. Something enduring there is which runs like a thread through

the whole; but the whole is in as incessant motion as a bubbling spring. France has an invisible core which runs enduring through the ages, but round that core France is ever changing and a new France is continually being created on the central thread of the old. The same also is it with the individual man. Something fundamental in me remains from my birth up till now and preserves my identity. But all round it I am changing every moment. The activities alike of the thoughts in my mind and of the countless myriads of particles of which my body is composed never cease for the thousandth portion of a second. And as in a nation or in a man, so also in the world as a whole: it is a process, an unceasing flux, a stream, a current.

This conception of the world as a process has been more generally accepted since the idea of evolution has been so carefully expounded. It is now well established that higher types have sprung from lower, and these again back from the simplest types of all. The highest races of men are known to have developed from semi-barbarous peoples, and these again from primitive savages. The modern European is the direct descendant of the rough Franks of the Rhineland, and these, again, of prehistoric men of the Stone Age, and of men who lived in caves or like monkeys in the

trees. Nor do many now doubt that arboreal, ape-like men sprang from man-like apes, and these from apes, and apes from lemurs, these from some primitive mammals, and the primitive mammals from amphibians, the amphibians from fishes, the fishes from jelly-fish-like creatures, and these from yet simpler forms, till we come down to the microscopic amœbæ, the simplest organisms of all. But even here the long line does not stop. We have reached the foundation of living things. And it has long been held that there must needs be an unbridgable gap here between the living and the non-living. Yet the tendency of modern scientific thought is to bridge the gap, to maintain the continuity, and to hold that the simplest organisms which can be called living must have evolved—and indeed are probably evolving all around us at the present day—from colloids or highly complex chemical combinations mid-way between the living and the non-living. These colloids again would have evolved from less complex chemical groupings; these from the compounds such as water, the compound of hydrogen and oxygen; these compounds from the chemical elements; the atoms of the chemical elements from the electrons; and these perhaps from the ether, the universal vehicle and store-house of energy.

Yet the process would not be all on simple lines like this. Nor would the whole of it be in the ascendant. There would be a splaying outward. The lowest and lower forms would always remain, though along one line the ascent would be continuous. The original ether remains. Single electrons, simple atoms, simple compounds, colloids, amœbæ,—all remain. So also do their splayings out from the central line in multitudinous directions, to fishes which rise no higher than fishes, to amphibians which develop no further, to mammals such as lions, tigers, elephants which can by no possibility ascend to apes, to apes which ever remain apes, to insects which develop to the intelligence and social capacity of bees and ants and then stop. And along the lines of highest ascent the bridges seem to have been destroyed behind, and the lower in creating the higher to have spent themselves. Of the cave-men who gave rise to the Europeans of the present day no trace remains. Nor of the apes who gave rise to the cave-men. In producing the higher they sacrificed themselves. Savages and apes who have produced nothing higher remain. But those to whom we owe our present high estate have perished from the earth.

And there has been retrogression also as well as advance and as well as what remains at the

same altitude. Some races of men we know have degenerated. And all through the animal kingdom instances of like degeneration may be found. And, in purely physical nature, complex chemical combinations break up into simple forms ; and even atoms, as radium illustrates, break up and throw off electrons.

Yet everywhere we see signs of a process. It may not be a process of advancement in all directions. In some an equilibrium may have been reached for a time. In others the equilibrium may have begun to totter. And where the equilibrium has broken it may sometimes have been through a superabundance of energy within, and from the change which was thus necessitated a higher equilibrium may have been reached ; and sometimes it may have been through a dwindling of internal energy, and a lower equilibrium may have resulted. But the point at present to note is that the World is not a static thing but a Process. Whether it is in process of development toward the good on the whole or toward the bad, toward the higher or toward the lower, will be investigated later on : all we have to note at this stage is that it is a Process.

And if the World is a Process, what we have to satisfy our minds about is whether some exter-

nal Personal Being, completely outside it, has been at work from the very beginning setting it in motion, continually directing its course and shaping its development; or whether it all along possessed within itself some inward Motive Power incessantly driving it onward. We have seen that it is built up of Energy, the fundamental units being simply centres of energy. And physicists such as Ostwald would reduce everything to forms of energy and regard it as the fundamental concept. But Energy after all is only a mental conception. We do not know what we really mean by it. And Energy alone will not produce a process—in the sense of an advancement to something higher or a retrogression to something lower. We must account for the fact of the World being a Process by something else than the mere existence of Energy.

At first sight it seems almost unavoidable that we must invoke the intervention of a Supernatural Being to account for this Process, and particularly for those "jumps" it appears to make every now and then, as from a non-living chemical compound to a living organism, and from animals to men. We think it impossible that so magnificent a procession should occur without some great organising Brain to direct the whole and some skilful Hand to move the pieces. Unless it had all

been carefully thought out beforehand by some colossal Mind outside the Process, and pursued unerringly by some determined Will, we find it difficult to believe that such splendid results could have been attained, or that the wonderful advance from the inanimate to the living, from life to mind, from apes to men, could have been made. For the higher to develop from the lower it seems obvious that some outside Possessor of the Higher must be there to instil it into the lower. And if from mere swarms of electrons are to develop the loves and heroisms of men, we would appear absolutely bound to assume that beyond them some Master-Mind must have been operating on these foundation units, controlling their movements, collecting them into groups and systems of groups, instilling into them new qualities, and ever marshalling them along the line to some immense predestined end.

Yet this so obvious a conclusion is not the only one which may be made from an observation of the facts. A difficulty in the way of believing that the World-Process is the production of some external Perfect Being is the imperfection we see all round us, even after all these hundreds of millions of years in which the world

has been in process. For everywhere is there imperfection, and nowhere is there perfection. The advance has been truly extraordinary. But we cannot point to a single thing in the universe and say of it that it is absolutely perfect and incapable of the slightest improvement. The eye is pointed out as a marvel of mechanism. But it is not perfect, and its defects of workmanship are obvious to an oculist, who can see where it might well have been improved upon. One man is believed by Christians to have been perfect. But even among Christians there are some who think that in art, in science, in philosophy other men have shown greater perfection, and that on these particular lines Plato, Newton, and Raphael were more perfect still. We cannot take a single man and not see where physically, intellectually, or morally he might not be immeasurably improved.

And as in the results so also in the methods by which they were brought about we find difficulty in recognising the work of a Being whom we could consider Perfect. To produce what is good there is prodigious waste. For the production of one mature fish, for example, thousands of eggs which perish uselessly are brought forth. And the wanton lavishness of nature is apparent everywhere. There is no sign of that economy of material which a Perfect Designer would show

even if he had only to produce the imperfect results which we see to-day.

We see wonderful things in nature, but nowhere perfection, and in the method employed we see manifest imperfection. From this observed fact we cannot therefore infer that a Perfect and all-powerful Being has been at work.

But while a contemplation of the actual operation of the World-Process makes it difficult for us to believe that it is the handiwork of any external Perfect Being, there is much which suggests that it contains within itself some natural urge or drive which constrains it to progress. The very constitution of things may be such that they cannot remain moving on the level, but must be in process of development upward or downward. And what is meant by this should be easily understood, for each one of us is an exact example. We can each of us recognise that there is something within him which drives him on and actuates a process of development—for good or for bad. Instead, therefore, of regarding the World-Process as having been initiated and directed by an external Being, we might look upon it rather as a bubbling spring which has that within it which necessitated the bubbling process.

And this view seems more comprehensible if we once more recall that cardinally important fact

which science has observed of the nature of the world—that it is not a collection of inert things as a heap of stones *apparently* are, and which would indeed require some outside agent to pick them up and place them in position, but that even the simplest, the most fundamental and infinitesimally minute units of matter, are vehemently and, in a sense, spontaneously active, are imbued with appalling energy and endowed with well-defined characteristics and properties of their own, in accordance with which they behave in a predictable manner and make us hesitate to decide whether they are really material or spiritual entities, and lastly, are every one inter-related with and influenced by all the others. The simplest components of which the World-Process is made up being so constituted, and all being so related to and influenced by the others, it is not so difficult for us to assume that such a whole must of necessity form a process. The aggregate of the Mutual Influence of such intensely active parts upon one another must necessarily, we might suppose, set up a process. And if we examine the World-Process with this hypothesis in mind of how it may have been brought about, we shall see ample grounds for believing it applicable.

When men first appeared upon the earth they

were in very small numbers; they lived at a distance from one another in groups not larger than the family, and perhaps only of a mother and her quite young children. The Mutual Influence of men upon one another must have been slight. But as men grew in numbers, as more of them collected in favourable localities for pasture, or later for agriculture, the reciprocal influence which they would exercise upon one another would sensibly increase. And when they grouped themselves into tribes it would become considerable. The individual man, instead of being able to wander about freely, thinking only of himself and of how he could escape his enemies and provide himself with food, would find the influence of his fellow-men constraining him to act with them in joint defence or in joint production of the necessaries of life. He would feel more and more the weight of public opinion upon him, compelling him to conform to recognised customs; and the influence of the different groups upon one another would have the effect of welding them together in more and more compact association. And as this occurred, qualities would emerge which were not observable in the individuals when separate. In fighting other tribes men would show heroism, for example, in risking and sacrificing their lives for

the good of the community. They would exercise foresight and self-control in preparing for possible conflicts. And in other directions also would display qualities which may have lain potentially in them before, but which had not so far been exercised. And a man who showed heroism or exercised foresight would exert a particular influence upon his fellows, and this would be thereby added to the aggregate Mutual Influence as the example of our national heroes goes to the building up of "England." In the same way, too, a group would come to display some particular quality such as bravery or discipline, and by this fact would exert a special influence upon other groups and so contribute that to the aggregate Mutual Influence which would permanently leave its mark upon it—as the contributions which the Romans made have permanently affected the general influence which we call Humanity.

But the influence to which a primitive man was subjected was not only the influence of his fellow-men, it was also the influence of other living things, both animal and plant, and of physical nature. And in the earlier stages of his development these must have contributed the greater portion of the sum-total of the Power of Mutual Influence to which a man was subjected. Primitive

man was exposed to the elements of nature in all their unmitigated force. He had little protection from heat or cold, rain or sun, flood or drought. He was subject to the attack of numerous wild animals. He dwelt in trees and lived on wild fruits and berries and such animals as he could catch. The Universe at that time and so far as we know for certain, consisted only of physical nature, the plants and animals, and these few men. In summing up the influence which all the individuals, including men, exerted upon one another, and which therefore any single individual man would feel, it would be found that man exerted only a very small proportion, and physical nature, such as climate, and animal and plant life, a very large proportion of the total influence. It would therefore be rough and coarse, with little refinement in it. Gradually, however, as men increased in numbers, in skill, in capacity for collective effort, and in knowledge of nature ; as they found means of protecting themselves from the effects of climate, of utilising natural resources, of exterminating dangerous animals and domesticating those which might be of use ; as they cleared away forests and cultivated food-bearing plants ; and as they themselves began to display higher qualities ; then the sum-total of the Mutual Influence would greatly change in character. The

human element would have begun to preponderate and the part occupied by nature to diminish. So that when we come to the present day we find the human is the dominant feature. And if we look to the future and judge by the way men are now dominating nature on the one hand, and on the other how they are aggregating in great cities where nature has little influence and man almost the whole, we may anticipate that the human will still further encroach upon the physical element.

The total Mutual Influence of the parts upon one another has, therefore, vastly changed in the experience of man upon the earth. It has become immensely stronger and more predominantly human.

Now if we apply what we have thus found in our own experience to the whole World-Process from atoms upwards to man, we can understand how it comes about that with active energetic individuals possessing characters of their own as well as a certain degree of spontaneity of action, yet bound by ties of relationship to one another, and so reciprocally influencing one another, a process occurs and new properties emerge. We see how men, in their efforts to find the most stable equilibrium, the most comfortable way of living together in a limited space, are driven to form

groups and systems of groups from which emerge higher qualities, till such qualities come out, as, for example, the French exhibit to-day, which we could never have believed could issue from their cave-inhabiting predecessors. And we can from this example imagine how it may come about that in the initial stages of the Process also the fundamental units were driven into groups and groups of groups.

At both ends of the World-Process—in its initial and in its latest stages—we see the occurrence of much the same thing. Under the necessity of finding a more stable equilibrium, or the easiest way of living together, the units, whether electrons, atoms, or men, form themselves into groups of increasing complexity from which higher and higher qualities emerge. And as it is at each end, so is it in the process as a whole. Right away through we may conjecture the same principle has been at work. In the lower stages we have seen how such properties as chemical affinity have emerged. In the middle it is legitimate to suppose that from the extremely complex chemical compound life and mind have emerged as properties of the compound—a critical point having been reached in the accumulation of electrons and atoms at which the existing equilibrium broke down and a new and higher

equilibrium had to be established from which the new property of life and mind arose. Seeming "jumps" in the Process do then occur, though the Process is, in reality, one and continuous. In this way we may suppose the world of to-day has resulted. The progress has been prodigious ; but it is intelligible if we reflect that thousands of millions of years have been available for the Process.

And this point that there has been something working within rather than from without will become still clearer if we consider, in a practical way, how all of us living men and women came to be here at the present moment. We are children of our parents, our parents children of their parents, and so on back and back without a single break anywhere to cave-men, ape-like men, apes, and down the whole long evolutionary line to amœbæ, chemical compounds, atoms, and electrons. Each of us has come right up in one continuous line, without a break, from the very simplest units. We are, as it were, but the last bubbles which have come to the surface. We have sprung from the very earth itself, as may be more easily intelligible when we recollect that the earth is not so grossly material as it looks, but that, at bottom, it is intensely active, and rather spiritual than

material. From right far back, from the deep heart of things, there has been an inward drive forcing us up to the surface. And of the strength and reality of this compelling impulse we may satisfy ourselves if we think how we ourselves are driven to beget a future generation, and not only to beget but to care for and do our best for that and all future generations. That is something of which we all have a perfectly definite experience. We can recognise also that it is something in us which is aroused by the Mutual Influence exerted between ourselves and others.

We infer, then, from the observations of scientific men and from our own individual experience, that things bear within themselves the impulse, and perhaps we may say the necessity, to develop higher and higher. The very bosom of things seems to contain this constant urge—an urge to the better as we shall presently see. The World-Process had that within it which insisted on fulfilment. It was held at the outset in the vaguest and loosest intimacy of union. But it was so constituted that it had to make that intimacy closer and closer. Driving on through all the ages has been this inward necessity. Through all the manifold vicissitudes of things this insistent impulse has endured like a thread through the whole.

We have very little means of observing what goes on elsewhere than on our planet, so we have to proceed with caution in inferring that all the rest of the Universe is conducted on the same principles as apply here. But so far as we have been able to observe the rest, that is in what the spectroscope tells us of the composition of the stars, our observations show that all the initial stages, up to the formation of the elements, are precisely the same there as here. And it is upon what we observe on this earth and in the Universe at large that we base the assumption that the World-Process is actuated by an inward principle —the Mutual Influence of spontaneously-active parts upon one another—and is not directed, controlled, and guided by a Perfect Being from outside.

So if one of the ultimate particles of matter were to ask us what was the Power which he felt continually acting upon him, and whether it was exercised by any supernatural Being wholly outside the world of ultimate particles, we should have to explain that the Power was simply that exercised by the Mutual Influence of all the other particles upon him ; we should have to say to the inquiring particle that he did not and could not live in isolation but only as part of a whole and in relationship with other particles, but that in that

relationship he possessed certain inherent qualities the exercise of which contributed to the formation of that Mutual Influence which he felt pressing upon him. To that extent we should say the Power was outside him though he himself contributed to its formation. But we should have to add that it was not outside all the particles, for if, by any possibility, they could all be annihilated, the Power would likewise itself disappear with them.

CHAPTER VI

PROCESS TOWARD GOOD

We have emphasised the conclusion of philosophy that this world is a Process ; and we have given our grounds for holding that this Process is actuated by an inner principle rather than directed by an outer Being. We have now to satisfy ourselves as to whether it is one of development toward the good. An easy-going optimism will assume this as a matter of course, and will be too lazy and indifferent to make any effort to ensure the prevalence of the good. In the present war there are numbers in each country who lightly assume that their own side is certain to win and do not trouble themselves any further. These easily satisfied optimists may be perfectly correct, but their opinion is of little value and their contribution towards the ultimate victory of the right very small. Of far greater value and of much more help toward the good is the opinion and work of the pessimist of clear brain and impartial judgment, who, after an examination of things

as they are, has his doubts whether things will work out for the good, and then sets to work to make them at any rate less bad than they otherwise might be. And austere and earnest thinkers have come to the conclusion that assurance of the prevalence of the good is wanting, and that almost inevitably whatever of good has been attained must eventually be swept away by the heartless grind of material forces. And these severely honest thinkers have been able to face the dreary prospect with true nobility of soul, and, in the words of Mr Russell, have sought to make as much of existence good and as much good exist as in them lay. Before such heroic pessimists the shallow optimist pales and shrivels. Yet he may be right, and I believe he is.

Wherever we look, whether on this planet or in the stars, we are confronted with the fact that dissociation occurs with association, disintegration with integration, dissolution with evolution, night with day, death with life. Evil therefore may—we might suppose—follow on good and slowly take its place. Yet I cannot see any solid ground for supposing that it should. We know far too little of this vast Universe to speak for it as a whole. In the immensity we only know this tiny speck which we call our earth. Yet in the main trend on this planet there would seem to be

advancement, a progress towards what is of real value, a development of what is truly good. There have been local and temporary ebbs as well as the main flow, but in the broad sweep during the five hundred million years of its existence there does seem to have been a steady emergence of the good.

Those who doubt this, point to the appalling amount of evil around us ; to the squalor, the misery, the pain, the grief, the meanness, the cruelty ; and they think it hard to say which is the greater, on the balance, the good or the evil. But if we take a long and a broad view ; if we look at things from a distance and from a height ; if we compare the state of the earth now with its state a hundred thousand years ago in the time of the cave-men, it seems impossible really to doubt that good has come through and that the earth is better now than it was then. Murder and theft, for example, are now at least recognised as evil, and attempts, to a certain degree successful, have been made to put them down. In the time of the cave-men they were not regarded as crimes but as an ordinary feature of life ; and such qualities as pity, mercy, and honour were probably unknown. Even very primitive peoples have higher qualities than most civilised people usually think. Still, those of us who have lived and

worked amongst such people can hardly doubt that what we are, I think, justified in calling the advanced races have a more vivid social feeling, a higher sense of obligation to our fellow-men, a more subtle and varied appreciation of beauty in nature and in art ; and a capacity for more exalted love. The individual in these higher civilisations, European and Asiatic, possesses a fuller individuality with more numerous aspects, and is, at the same time, a more sensitively social individual than the primitive man. His sympathy is wider, keener, and more delicate ; his feelings are finer ; his sentiments nobler ; his honour brighter ; his intelligence clearer ; and his whole life fuller, more varied, and more alive. If it were not that thinkers of repute hesitate, it would seem manifestly absurd to doubt that the state of man to-day is better than his state when he first appeared on this earth.

And when we go back another stage, to the time before men existed, and when the earth was overrun by those huge monsters with whose ungainly shapes we are so familiar from pictures in books and models in museums ; and when we compare the state of the earth then with the state of the earth to-day, we would think that the emergence of good was still more certainly obvious. And we would think it even yet

clearer if we go right back to the remotest origins of this earth. The state of the earth to-day is, we must surely admit, distinctly better than it was five hundred million years ago, when it was a fiery mist.

But this planet is a very minute speck in the Universe, and five hundred million years is, in a sense, not a very long period. While there has been progress here, there may have been retrogression on other planets. And while there has been progress on this planet for the last five hundred million years, during the next five hundred million years our progress may reach a climax and then decline. If we are of a pessimistic frame of mind we will accept this as a foregone conclusion, and, with the courage of the real pessimist, make the best of it. But if we are incorrigible optimists, we will resolutely cling to a larger hope.

We will argue thus to ourselves. "I" persist and grow and develop through long years in spite of the flow and ebb of integration and disintegration of groups of atoms and cells in my body. Every atom, every cell of the body with which "I" was born, and every group and association of atoms and cells may have changed, may have risen, played its part, and then dissociated and disintegrated away ; and yet "I," emanating from

those groupings and interdependent on them, have grown and developed as new atoms and groupings of atoms have continually been replacing old. In the same way the World-Spirit may be growing and developing, better and better, the optimist may urge, in spite of the disintegration and dissolution of groupings on a particular planet. But then the pessimist will say that, after all, "I" only persist and grow and develop up to a certain point, up to threescore years and ten, and then "I" also decline and disappear. To which the optimist will reply that this may be so, yet the community to which "I" belong, "England," grows and develops though Englishmen and groups of Englishmen are continually dying and passing away. "England" will persist and flourish when all present Englishmen are dead. But then it will be urged that England also, like Babylon and Assyria of old, will, in the course of thousands of years, die away. And this also may be admitted ; but yet "Humanity" will still persist and progress. Babylon, Egypt, Greece, Rome, England, France all may disappear, yet Humanity may remain and may all the time be growing in knowledge, in social virtue, and in every high quality. The pessimist, however, may urge that this can be only for a while ; that after a certain period—it may be a few hundreds

of thousands of years, or it may be a few millions of years, but anyhow eventually—this earth may grow cold or be dashed into by some other star, and Humanity itself come to an end, and the Universe roll relentlessly on as if man with all his loves and ambitions and hopes and heroisms had never been.

But if the pessimist thus argues, he will clearly have overreached himself. Up to a few years ago it was assumed as a certainty that the earth would grow cold and uninhabitable, but the discovery of radium has prolonged its life almost indefinitely. We can say nothing for certain as to how long it may be habitable for man, and any change in its conditions may be so slow and gradual that man, with his rapidly increasing knowledge and power over nature, may easily be able to accommodate himself to the changing conditions. And the possibility of a collision with another star or planet is too remote a contingency for consideration.

Humanity will almost certainly progress during the next few million years to a degree of which it is impossible for us, at this stage, to form any conception. We may take what the best men in their highest moments have not only reached but conceived, and we may well suppose that even they have not been able to foresee what

Humanity will be ten or a hundred or five hundred million years hence. How could the most far-seeing prehistoric man have possibly foretold the France of the present day?

And if, after all, Humanity is doomed like the individual "I" and like "England" to extinction, there is still the hope to cling to that ere our final extinction takes place we may have found contact with other living beings and communities in other planets of other stars than our Sun; and that as Humanity persists and advances after all existing individuals and nations have disappeared, so the Universal Spirit, reinforced and elevated by the contribution which Humanity will have made, will persist and develop in other communities of the Universe.

So we may, with some confidence, believe that in this our little corner of the Universe things are, on the whole, making for the good; and reason does not forbid us to hold the faith and hope that they may likewise work for the good throughout the Universe at large. For wherever we have been able to observe the initial stages of the Process, they have been working on precisely the same lines as they are pursuing on this planet. And it may indeed be, as some suppose, part of the very necessity of things that they should work out for the good.

But while—on this earth, at any rate—good does come through, it must be noted that it is not produced automatically. It does not come about by individuals sitting with folded arms complacently expecting it to result. It is the creative work of individuals, just as a poem or a picture or a statue is a creation of the artist. It comes by effort. The individual in one sense is being carried along in the whole great current of the World-Process. Yet it is also incumbent on him to keep his feet as firmly as he possibly can, and, if need be, strike out his own direction. He cannot say that all is determined for him and that he has no choice. And he cannot say that he has complete choice and that nothing is determined. There is an alternation and balancing between what is determined for him and what is open to his own free-will to do. But this he will always find—that there is an urgent, an incessant, and an insistent demand upon him to do his best, to fulfil the utmost that is in him, and to do even more than that, to ever *surpass* himself. The World-Spirit will determine him to this extent, that it will thus perpetually incite him to surpass himself and aspire to the best. But it will rest with the individual himself to choose what *is* the best and to achieve what he has chosen.

That good may eventuate, effort therefore is

necessary. And not only effort, but sacrifice. For it is by the sacrifice, not survival, of the best that advance is made. Survival of the fittest is one rule of the Universe, and the individual has to fit himself to the top of his capacity to play his part in the world. But it is for the general good, for his country, or for humanity that he fits himself to do the very best that is in him, and he cares not whether he survives or no. The sacrifice of the best is then a more important rule than the survival of the fittest. The worst survive ; the best sacrifice themselves for the still better. The very worst survive for ever. The very best succumb instantly. But in succumbing the best give birth to the still better. The rudest savage tribes survive to the present day, and Greece succumbed. But in succumbing Greece gave birth to the cultured nations of to-day. Rough apes survive now, but the highest apes, in giving birth to man, have disappeared. So it is right through the whole evolutionary process. The lowest forms of life survive to this day, while innumerable higher types have vanished. And we may observe the same rule in operation at the present moment. Walking down the streets we may see the worst of our manhood surviving, while the best is being sacrificed on the field of battle. Yet we know that it is by such sacrifice

that our country will advance. So while it may be true that good must in the end prevail, it will only prevail by the effort of individuals and through the sacrifice of the best.

We would then view the Universe as one Whole outside of which there would be nothing ; one Unity, that is to say, of innumerable diverse parts, each part, however minute and simple, down to the very ultimate, being an entity and not a nonentity, being a thing in some degree animated, in some degree spontaneous, and not a thing wholly inert. Each part would be influencing and would be influenced by all the other parts, and as a result of the Mutual Influence of all the parts upon one another, as a result of each active individual part striving to work out a *modus vivendi* with the rest, there would be established that orderliness and regularity which is everywhere observable at the foundation of things. Further, the nature of the Mutual Influence which the parts would exert upon one another would be such as, besides establishing orderliness and regularity, also to make for and result in betterment. From the very foundation of things, and out of their inherent nature, there would thus issue an imperative urge to the better, an insistent effort at self-surpassal, eventuating in the continual

ascendancy of the best. There would be thus something more in the Unity of the Whole than there was in its constituent elements, and the interaction between it and the component parts would result in the creation of more and higher good. The amount of energy and matter would remain the same; but the good would ever increase. What was of higher and higher worth would be continually being created.

There would be no outside Creator, Artificer, or Organiser with some considered plan in his mind, into whose shape and outlines he was gradually fashioning the world. But out of the World itself and from the Mutual Influence of the self-active parts upon one another there would issue such a Power as would establish order and regularity and set in being a process. And betterment would thus result from the method of trial and error pursued by the active individual parts, and not from the accomplishment of an externally conceived plan. Nor would there be a mere unfoldment of what was already inside. There would be something more than evolution viewed as exfoliation. There would be a genuine creation of something new—not new things, but what is of higher and higher worth.

We saw in an earlier chapter what a tremendous Power Man is becoming on the earth, and how

rapidly he is *increasing* in power. We now see that his activities will not be confined by the limits and contractions of a plan which has already been drawn up for him by some outside Designer. The ground is not staked out. All lies open in front beyond the utmost limits of imagination or conception. When one horizon is reached a still wider and more glorious lies beyond. There is unlimited scope for Man's activities. We ourselves shall not live to see it, but there is nothing in the nature of things to prevent our highest dreams and all that we have most hoped and wished for being one day realised, even on this earth—and being looked upon, perhaps, as the naïve and innocent fancies of children by those mature men and women the far future will have then produced in our race.

CHAPTER VII

EXAMPLE OF EUROPE

Reverting now to the present situation in Europe, we will see how this conception of things would apply. We could hardly suppose that some Perfect and Almighty Being deliberately fomented all the present strife, cruelties and sufferings, suspicions and jealousies. Some earthly rulers are believed to have immense autocratic power. The Czar of Russia, for example, is thought to possess the authority and the power to issue orders which would decide the fate of peace or war for Europe. But can we imagine an earthly ruler who really had such power, who was absolutely dominant on this earth, who could decide the fate of every individual in it, and who was also perfect and good, ever allowing the present war to take place? Can we suppose, for a moment, that, with the power and the wisdom to prevent it, he would yet have permitted the Servians to irritate Austria, the Austrians so hastily to make war on Servia, the Russians to

mobilise, the Germans to invade Belgium and France, and Great Britain to take up arms? And if we cannot imagine a strong and beneficent earthly ruler permitting these things, it is still more difficult to suppose that a Perfect, Omnipotent Heavenly Ruler would allow them. If we are seeking for the causes of the war, are we not much more likely to find them in the characters of men and of their natural environment and in their Mutual Influence upon one another? Is it necessary to go outside of men themselves and of their physical surroundings to account for what has happened? Need we invoke either an outside God or the Devil?

What is it that has really happened? European nations have been growing in numbers and growing in power. Their needs, ambitions, and aspirations have been increasing with their growth. And in this vigorous temperate climate their natures have also tended to become hardy and vigorous. So they have wanted to expand and stretch themselves all over the world. Their material needs have also so augmented that they require the products of every land. For this they each want free access to the open sea. Germany and Austria feel pent up and suffocated in the centre of Europe. Germany wants to burst out on to the open ocean. Austria wants to expand

South-Eastward on to the Ægean Sea. But Russia feels the urgent need to do likewise. She also feels a similar need to reach the open Southern seas. It had therefore long been foreseen that between the Teuton pressing Eastward and the Slav pressing Southward there must sooner or later come some tremendous struggle.

Again, with growth of her population, Germany has wanted land on which the surplus may settle. No more land is available in Europe, so she is driven to look for lands beyond the seas. And for this purpose also, as well as to obtain the natural products which her own soil cannot supply, she is driven to seek access to the open sea. But here she comes in contact with the British, for whom such needs are still more urgent and have been longer felt.

Since the war has commenced it has become apparent, too, that Germans were permeated through and through with the doctrine that they were the possessors of the highest culture, and that it was their duty to mankind to attain such a domination that they would be able to impose it upon the rest of the world—whether other men liked it or not. And this attitude of mind naturally aroused opposition from those who preferred their own culture.

These were the main conditions which prevailed

in Europe; and when Austria made extreme demands upon Servia, and required a reply within forty-eight hours, it was foreseen immediately that catastrophe must follow. For many years Servian growth had been blighted and stunted by Turkish domination. But when, with the help of Russia, she had been freed from this weight, she instantly sprang into new life. She increased in vigour and sought to expand; and Russia, her protecting relative, favoured her growth. But by her expansion she crossed the road of Austrian expansion, and hence that conflict of wills which can only be settled either by one giving in to the other or by the arbitrament of war. Austria had for many years been anxious about the growth of the Servian race. The Servians had been suspicious of Austrian intentions. The Austrians believed the assassination of the Archduke Ferdinand was part of a great plot to thwart Austrian power, and in consequence they delivered their ultimatum to Servia, leaving the Servians the alternative either of submitting, in which case they would have come wholly under Austrian domination, or of fighting. In taking up this position, the Austrians are believed to have had the support of Germany. And Germany gave them her support because she was under the impression that Russia would not support Servia by force of arms, that France

was in an unfit state to support Russia, and that Great Britain was on the verge of civil war. The struggle between the Teuton and the Slav had to come some time. Russia was every year growing in strength. The present, therefore, seemed the most favourable moment.

In all this there seems no place or call for the intervention of any External Being. It certainly does not bear on the face of it the mark of a perfectly good and wise God's handiwork. The Archbishop of Canterbury, in a sermon preached at the commencement of the war, said that "this thing which is now astir in Europe is not the work of God, but of the Devil." It is, he added, "devil-born." But this explanation is no more satisfactory, for it would imply that there were two outside Persons influencing the actions of men—God on the one hand and the Devil on the other, and the Devil apparently thwarting the work of God, a fact which in its turn would imply that God was not omnipotent, and men would be simply pawns in a struggle between God and the Devil.

The more obvious and perhaps truer explanation is that Austrian statesmen, carried away, it may be, by the natural excitement of the people, acted too hastily and imperiously. They believed they were acting for the best interests of their

country. Subsequent events have shown that they were wrong. But the point is that their actions were the everyday actions of common men, and there is no reason to believe that they were incited thereto by any outside being—either by a God or a Devil.

Similarly with the Germans. The German Emperor does indeed think that his actions are in a peculiar degree directed by God. But to a plain observer both his deeds and the deeds of his advisers, political and military, seem simply the acts of ordinary human beings. From a German's point of view, they will be the actions of strong, wise, far-seeing, masterful men. From an Englishman's standpoint, they will appear arrogant and singularly lacking in wisdom and righteousness.

What we have then is a group of growing, vigorous nations, pressing upon one another, every year becoming more formidable to each other, and each feeling that if it lets the other get the advantage of it, it will be pressed out and smothered under for ever. All these nations are composed of ordinary human beings and are led by ordinary men. Year by year the tension becomes greater. Year by year the statesmen become more nervous. Once or twice the break-

ing point has almost been reached. At last the strain becomes unbearable. The equilibrium is broken, and a general *mêlée* takes place until a new equilibrium can be established.

We should have difficulty in finding any one single definite "cause" for the war. There are proximate causes and deeper causes going on back and back and wider and wider, till we have to include the history of every nation and the geography and climate of every country, and we begin to recognise that it is but the latest development of one mighty Process, ever in incessant action.

We see nations influenced by their natural surroundings, by the climate and by the geographical position and productivity of their country; and we see them influenced by and influencing the activities of one another. And the power which men at a time like this feel acting on them with such terrific strength is the power which comes from the Mutual Influence of these great nations upon another. When a single nation has to gather itself up to act together in a single direction, the influence of the great general will upon the individual is immense. But when huge nations of many scores of millions of men are acting upon one another the impact is necessarily colossal. Hence that feeling of overwhelming power which we individuals experience.

But because the Power is great we have no need to look beyond this earth and the men on it for its origin.

Yet it may be argued that if the Power arising from the Mutual Influence of the nations upon one another has brought about the war it cannot be a Power which makes for good. This would be so if nothing but bad was to result from the war, and if this war were the end of all things. But this war, great as it is, is only an episode in the whole history of the world, and ten thousand years hence its marks for good or for bad will be wellnigh unobservable. We have to take long sweeps of vision to judge whether the Mutual Influence of nations works out for good or for bad. But, looking even to the present war alone, we can reasonably have faith that much good—good perhaps overbalancing the evil—will result. For there never was a war in which each nation was more absolutely convinced that it was fighting for the right. The Germans may be as much convinced of the righteousness and justice of their cause as we are of ours. And when men and nations are fighting in such a spirit and are so imbued with a sense of the justice of their cause, good must in the end eventuate. There is not a man taking part in this great struggle who will

not come out of it with a scorn of the trivial, the exotic, the effeminate, with a heightened regard for his fellow-men, and with a conviction that his countrymen through all future generations must lead cleaner, saner, healthier, nobler, more self-sacrificing lives.

The present state of Europe is, then, a striking example of the working within men of a Power which, rising from men themselves in their interaction upon one another and upon their natural surroundings, does make for good. It is a Spiritual Power—a Power which has in it evil as well as good, folly as well as wisdom, cruelty as well as pity, but it is in the main good. And it is within our means and it is our business to make it better.

This Power which results from the Mutual Influence of men and nations upon one another is in the main good. *But it is within our means and it is our business to make it better.* For, wellnigh irresistibly as it acts upon the individual, this examination of the causes of the war will show that the individual does retain his freedom of action and consequent responsibility. The individual may feel himself impelled along in the mighty World-Process, but within certain limits he has still the capacity for free action, and this is

the counterbalancing point of supreme importance which it is necessary to note. We have not been able to fix upon the action of any single man and say of it that that and that only was the cause of the war. Even if we had fixed upon the German Emperor and had said that by his action in mobilising his army he had brought about the war, we should have had to admit that he must have been influenced by the advice of his ministers and generals and by the irritation which the actions of Servia, Russia, France, and England caused him. He must have been acted upon by innumerable influences, past as well as present, and carried along in the great sweep of human movement. And yet we can see most distinctly and indisputably that, in spite of all this, much also did depend upon his own individual action. For if it had so happened that he personally had strongly made up his mind that it was unwise or wrong to make war at the present time, and if he had had the courage and strength of will to act on this decision and had refused to sanction the mobilisation, there is hardly a doubt that war would not have occurred—now, at all events. Or, to take the case of our own country : it is quite certain that our statesmen wanted peace, and that it was only under the immense pressure of events and weight of circumstances that they decided for war. The

influences were so strong that they had to act against their personal inclination, and most of us think they acted rightly. Yet that something does rest with the individual, even under this overwhelming pressure, we can see by considering what a different course might have been taken if Mr Asquith, Sir Edward Grey, Mr Lloyd George, and Mr Churchill had never existed, and their present positions had been occupied by Lord Morley and Messrs Trevelyan, Ramsay Macdonald, and John Burns—all men who in the present crisis declared themselves in favour of peace. Whether we went to war or not did depend upon the decision of individual men.

And the responsibility of individuals, when those individuals are nations—their responsibility to themselves and to each other rather than to any external Being—will stand out clearly if we consider what is implied by such expressions as the Laws of Nations and the Laws of Humanity. These we look upon as something very real in human affairs, for we get exceedingly angry, and may even go to war, if they are broken. But if we look coolly into the matter we scarcely believe that they are made by any authority external to the nations themselves. They have evidently come about in the long course of time by the rub of nation against nation. And we know that

nowadays they are made by the representatives of nations sitting round a table in Hague Conventions. And when a nation breaks one of those laws—bombards a defenceless town, for instance, and kills a number of women and children—we do not in practice look to some outside Person to enforce it ; we look to the individual nations to do this necessary work. We may believe that the nations as a whole are animated by a Spirit which makes them enact for themselves ever humaner laws. But it is the nations alone that make these Laws of Nations and Laws of Humanity. It is they and none other who have to enforce them. And it is upon them and none other that rests the responsibility of effecting necessary improvements and of adopting measures for their enforcement.

So the course which the world takes depends upon the decision and action of individuals. Any single individual will feel himself under the pressure of a tremendous Power ; and that Power does, we believe, in the main and in the long-run make for good. But whether the way to the highest and to the most good is chosen and followed depends upon the free choice of individual men and women. And as they choose and act well or ill, so will the Power of their Mutual Influence upon one another improve or deteriorate.

CHAPTER VIII

THE IDEAL

That the World is a Whole ; that the Whole is a Process ; that the Process is one of development towards the good ; that the Power which actuates the Process and whose Unseen Presence men are continually feeling is not exerted by an External Being, but is a Spirit immanent in the Process itself ; and that however strongly he may feel the Spirit acting upon him, it depends upon the free-will of the individual himself whether or no he adopts the course which leads to the highest good —these are the chief conclusions so far reached. The individual feels himself related to and influenced by others ; he feels he is part of a whole ; he feels himself being swept along by almost overwhelming influences, and he may be convinced that those influences, taken together, form a power which works for good. But yet he has also to grasp this crucial point that the attainment of the good rests upon his own wise choice, his own firm decision, and his own resolute action.

We individual men, as the crowning points of the World-Process, feel within ourselves an urge to something better than we see around us, or than we ourselves have yet reached. We have that within us which is incessantly driving us to surpass ourselves. We shall not be able to define it, but we shall be constantly stretching out to a greater perfection. We shall mean well and wish with all our heart to do our best. But our difficulty is that mere impulse is not sufficient in itself. Only well-meaning and good intentions do not suffice for the achievement of the best. Clear, rigorous thinking, wise judgment, and the ability to profit by the practical experience of the past are also necessary. Even then we can scarcely hope to be able to hit off at once exactly the right line to take, for the World-Process, and we as the head and front of it, must necessarily proceed by the method of trial and error. There is no exact course laid down. And for all we think ourselves so old we are still very young and inexperienced, and still very liable to make mistakes.

And how difficult it is to form a right judgment our present experiences prove. We have the privilege of living in the greatest moments of the world's history. Nations and individuals are prepared to stake their very existence on the decision they take. Presumably, therefore, they

choose with the utmost wisdom of which they are capable the course which they shall pursue. And each believes it has taken the wisest and most righteous course. Yet we see the most subtle and carefully trained intellects, the most experienced men of affairs, and the most religious-minded of men—men who have spent their lives in reaching and teaching the truth—differing profoundly and diametrically as to the wisdom and righteousness of the course which others have taken. We have men in England of the first intellectual attainments saying that we were acting nobly and in the purest interests of humanity in declaring war. And we have Professors in Germany of world-wide renown, men who have commanded the highest esteem, asserting that by declaring war we are striking a blow at the finest culture. We have tried and experienced Statesmen, in whose honour, wisdom, and judgment we place the most implicit trust, stating that their only desire is to uphold public law, to keep treaty engagements, and to stand by their friends ; and we have Statesmen, in whom Germans place a like trust, declaring that this same action of ours is filled with treachery and designed to aim a felon blow at Germany. We have the most eminent divines in Germany declaring their conviction that the course which Germany has adopted leads to righteousness ; and we have our

own divines equally convinced that Germany's action is utterly wicked.

The choice of the best course to take is palpably therefore one of extreme difficulty. In making it, men of the maturest wisdom and most impartial judgment may differ. But the choice must obviously depend upon what we mean by the best, upon what ideal we have in our minds. The determination of our ideal is therefore the first essential for righteous action.

Now there is an ideal which is being tried and tested at the present moment. It is the glorification of power, and the placing the need to be strong above every other consideration. It is the sanctification of naked brutal force, of hardness, cruelty, craftiness, hatred, and envy ; and it is the degradation of pity, sympathy, mercy, honour, and chivalry. It professes to have a sublime object as its ultimate end, but it seeks to achieve that end by means of aggression, domination, disregard of others' feelings and rights, the suppression of individuality, and the mastery (rather than direction) of the many by the few. There must be much of good in this ideal, or so great a people as the Germans would not have adopted it with such thoroughness and at such a cost. And Nietzsche's original ideal was much finer than that which his

countrymen have in practice adopted. And, again, Nietzsche's life was finer than his ideal. For he himself was "the soul of sweetness and kindliness," according to one who knew him most intimately ; and few can read his books without being braced intellectually and morally or without feeling their souls ennobled. Nietzsche's instinct for nobility, his stern intellectual discipline, his austerity of thought, his indifference to the praise or blame of lesser men, his thirst for the approval of the best, the cool serenity he inculcates in those who would reach the truly noble, are all most admirable. So also are his contempt for effeminacy, his courage "which knoweth but subdueth fear," his "sympathy under a hard shell" which thus "possesses delicacy and sweetness," his readiness to "give" with no expectation of return. And his principle that man must *surpass* himself, must prepare the way and even sacrifice himself for the larger, greater, higher men to come whom he must help to create, is one which all true men will have to adopt.

Nietzsche's error was that, while he wished to raise all to a sublime destiny, he meant to do it by the methods of the drill sergeant. Men were to be turned into machines, and to be of precisely the same pattern. Individuality was to be suppressed. Even in a personal friendship of his

own he demanded an absolute assent to each of his thoughts. And, as we know, the German nation has adopted this idea and would make the whole world conform to their "culture." He preached isolation and excessive individuality for the masters, and utter suppression of individuality for the mastered. And in so doing he ran counter to the whole trend of the World-Process, and therefore must be suspect—though not on that account necessarily wrong, for if we were convinced that the highest good could *only* be attained by opposing the trend of the World-Process, we should have to set our strength against it, as we would swim against a stream or face a gale if high purpose so demanded.

But this impression of isolation which Nietzsche gives, and the suppression of individuality which he advocates for the mass, do not make for the highest good. For neither man, nor beast, nor plant, nor the minutest and most insignificant particle of matter is ever really isolated. All forms a whole, and the interdependence of each upon all, and their Mutual Influence, making for greater intensity of union, is one of the great fundamental facts which we believe we have established. Mutual relationship, influence, interdependence, is the rule of the Universe, and is one from which we cannot possibly escape. Moreover,

it is not one from which it is desirable that we should escape. *Relative* isolation, occasional solitude, is indeed often necessary to enable individual men and women to preserve and develop some precious gift from the rough touch of unheeding boors incapable of appreciating its value. But even in these cases it is not desirable that the isolation should be anything like complete, or that it should be prolonged. For man in isolation from his fellows is prone to dry up and wither : to reach his highest he must be in touch with his fellows. He must feel their warm human sympathy and be stirred and stung up by their opposition.

The great men of the world may on occasions and at intervals have dwelt apart and gone off into the desert to pray. But their dominant characteristic has been their keen and vivid sense of unity with all other men and women, and often with all living things and with the whole Universe. This oneness, this sense that all are vitally and most intimately connected with one another, is to these great leaders of mankind a truth of supreme significance. To them, even the term brotherhood is wholly inadequate. The unity which they feel to exist is altogether closer and more intimate than the usual relationship of brothers. And even the relationship of ordinary lovers does not suffice. Love is to lovers the most real thing,

and the thing of most value in their lives. But there is an experience which some men have, akin to personal love, but intenser still, and impressive of still greater reality—a feeling rare, indeed, and experienced only in a few special moments, but in those precious moments reaching out to all living things, and filling those who have it with a loving need to make every single other human being participate in the holy joy. This experience is the most truly real thing in the Universe. Of all else, therefore, it must be most considered in the formation of an ideal ; and only that ideal which is founded on this realisation of the deep unity among men, and which seeks to increase, deepen, and intensify the intimacy of that union, can be a secure ideal for men to set before themselves.

But, if there is unity, there is also diversity ; and experience shows that as the unity deepens the diversity widens. In the lowest stages of the World-Process, and when the unity was slight, there was almost complete uniformity among individuals. But, as the unity has become more intimate, and as higher individuals have evolved, so also has there been increased diversity among them. And among men we may make the same observation. Primitive men were very slightly united, and differed little from one another. The

higher men are far more closely bound together, but yet are as diverse from each other as a Prime Minister is from a crossing sweeper. Diversity, therefore, will always exist along with the unity, and it is, indeed, a necessity for unity, for only as an individual has free play and scope for the fulfilment of himself and for the development of his individuality will he feel really united with his fellows.

And, if we may judge from the whole course of the World-Process, diversity will continue to exist and continue to increase. Any effort made, therefore, to introduce uniformity is going against the grain of the whole process — and without effecting any useful object, for uniformity does not tend to true unity. Experience shows that it is only when men and nations can exercise and develop their own individuality that they really unite. When individuality is suppressed disunion results. Even individual atoms are not submerged. They coalesce, but in so doing they retain their individuality as atoms, and, by their mutual influence upon one another, give rise to some higher property than was in any one of the separate individuals. And it was by being able to give free play to their individuality and not by its suppression that they were able to achieve this happy result.

These being the general lines on which, so far as our observation and experience can show us, the Universe runs, we may suspect any efforts towards that domination which so stifles individuality—any attempts to drive the souls out of men and turn them into automatic machines. We should rather expect that the wiser course, the course which is more likely to achieve the best results, would be one which encouraged the individual to defend, uphold, and express his individuality to its fullest —though in mutual relationship with other individuals, so that the individual will be not an isolated but a social individual.

On such lines there will be unity, but it will be the unity of diversity. It will not be the unity of the regiment, where the command of one is imposed on all, and all are moulded on the same pattern ; it will be the unity of the orchestra, where all are *directed* by one but in which each, playing his own part with the whole soul that is in him, will produce with his fellow-musicians one perfect harmony. There will be all the wonderful discipline of the Germans, but it will not be imposed upon the individual by others : the individual will impose it on himself. There will be discipline, and of the very sternest and strictest ; but it will be self-discipline. There will be control, and of the very firmest ; but it will be self-control. And

there will be sacrifice, and of the very utmost; but it will be self-sacrifice.

There will be all those qualities of austerity, endurance, fortitude, valour, which Nietzsche so held up for admiration. There will be his blasting contempt of what is soft and mean, effeminate and sordid. There will be his love of what is noble, and his capacity for recognising and appreciating true nobility and distinction. There will be, too, his love of Beauty, of Music, of Poetry, of all the Arts, and of all natural Beauty. But Nietzsche will be tempered by Whitman. Concentration in search of the noble will be balanced by expansiveness in elevating the average. The crowd will open a way for noble men and women to come through to the front. But these noble ones will not use their position to drill their fellows into a machine. Rather will they direct men by sending a living inspiration lightening through them and starting every man among them to emulate his leader. Men will not march forward under the word of command and goaded on from behind. They will swell forward joyously with a swift intuition of their leader's meaning, and a tested faith in his competence to lead.

So the idea that Power, strength, force, the will to Power, should be our highest aim; that by

natural selection is meant the selection of those who have most bare strength; that by the survival of the fittest is meant those who are fittest in the athletic sense; that by the struggle for existence is meant the pushing back of others into the water that we ourselves may be saved; that the merely strongest and most powerful individual—be that individual a nation or a single man or woman—is the one to be most admired and imitated, regardless of whether he is tolerant or intolerant of the feelings, claims, and aspirations of others—such an idea will have to be abandoned and exterminated. For direct experience shows that if an individual has nothing but force and strength, and has only physical fitness and no regard for the feelings of others, or consciousness of his sociality, he also will go under and be left behind. The mastodon and mammoth, the tiger and the lion, and all such individuals, remarkable only for their brute strength and utterly deficient in social qualities, have either disappeared or have been left far in the rear. What goes ahead is the individual who can best comport himself in company with other individuals, nations who can enter into the feelings of other nations, men who have the most vivid sense of their unity with other men, and of their Mutual Influence upon one another, and who are thereby

driven to absorb into themselves whatever influence is better than their own, and to persuade others also to acquire the best. A country like France might be overcome by sheer force, but, if she were, it is certain that the finest of the French spirit would uprise, and in the end prevail, over naked force, and eventually use it for its own purposes.

We shall have to fit ourselves, as an athlete or a fighter fits himself, and have every faculty in us taut and clean and healthy. We shall have to be prepared at all points, and be ready both to defend our individuality and to secure scope and room for its expansion and growth. But—and this is what needs such emphatic protest—we shall not so prepare ourselves with the mere selfish object of surviving. Whether we survive or not will be a matter of indifference to us. We shall make ourselves as fit and ready and our individuality as full and perfect as we can make it, in order that we may have the more to give and the more to sacrifice for the good of all, for the good of our country, for the good of humanity.

Compensating for, and rounding off the sterner, severer, more individualistic virtues, will be those social virtues—the capacity for entering into the feelings, the standpoint, the aspiration of others,

and that intuitive sympathy and tender solicitude for those others of which Abraham Lincoln is a supreme example. And beyond this, again, will be that final touch of the Divine which comes to leader and led alike in that culminating moment when each individual feels every faculty in him at its furthest stretch, and, thus feeling himself completely fulfilled, finds himself, by that very fact, in closest union with all others, in one living, thrilling Whole, and realises that he is something more than a merely social individual—more than a member of a social body in the sense that a limb is member of the body ; more than a part of a social organisation in the sense that a wheel is part of a machine—that he is a religious individual, a spiritual part of the Universal Soul, a part, and an active part, of the whole pulsing World-Process, with its Spirit glowing through him ; sweeping him upward with its inward fire ; uniting him with each other member of the whole infinitely more closely than any wheel to a machine or limb to the body, or brother to brother, or son to father ; and by this very sense of oneness with all others which it inspires, filling him with a yearning of the tenderest love to carry these others upward with him.

Thus no one type can be laid down as a pattern for all other men. But the highest men and

women will have this in common, that they will possess in a superlative degree that love of their fellows which the ordinary experience of life and such sudden episodes as the foundering of a ship show that all men and women to some extent possess. And this divine love of humanity will make them reach forward with a woman's impulse to do their best and sacrifice their all for those children of the future whom they are even now begetting, and for whom their dearest wish will be that of all life's joys and beauties they may possess a far ampler measure than they themselves have found.

CHAPTER IX

PRAYER AND WORSHIP

We strain towards our highest ideal. We want to be and do our best. We want to do our best for others—both for those present and for those to come—for our country and for humanity. And we want the best to come to others. We have in our soul's eye a vision of something greater, better, loftier, braver, more generous and more compassionate than we ourselves are, and we pray and eagerly yearn to be that better. We confess our sins; we honestly acknowledge to ourselves that we are imperfect and have done downright wrong, and we seek strength to be better. How and whence shall we obtain it?

While we were in an immature stage of development the only way in which we could understand the Spirit which animates the Universe was by personifying it, and we would instinctively personify it in our own likeness, for we could hardly do otherwise. Instinctively also we would place this Being in the Heavens, for the essence

of the World-Spirit is that it flames upward. Naturally, therefore, we projected our thoughts towards the skies. We would make images and representations of this Being; we would figure it in our minds as a glorified Man issuing His commands, formulating His laws, waxing wroth at one time, and displaying love and mercy at another. We would place this Being somewhere vaguely beyond the stars, and to Him we would pray for help and comfort, and for intercession on our behalf when trouble came.

But as, in progressing towards maturity, we find that such personification is only a mode of thought, we realise that the Spirit whose influence we always and everywhere feel is something working within men, and issuing from them—something which comes welling up from the deep-down World-Spring which swirled us upward to where we are, and is ever urging through us onward still to something better yet. Our mode of prayer therefore changes. But prayer remains—only growing intenser and aspiring higher. It will no longer be the begging of personal favours and the beseeching to be saved from consequences which must inevitably follow given precedents. But men will open wide the flood-gates of the soul. As they would inhale the beauty of a summer's day, so will they imbue themselves with the deep

inner Goodness of Things. And thus filled to overflowing with this holy influence, they will let their souls float freely upward and aspire after a best they cannot even formulate or conceive but only dimly know must be. In such way will men open out themselves in prayer. And then, as the moment for action arrives, remembering that it is on themselves alone that responsibility lies, they will fast close again the gateways of their souls, tightly collect themselves together once more, grasp to them all the best they have been able to gather in, and, clinging resolutely on to that, go into the world of action with this very best as their stay and stand-by. So will they find strength. And when the strain of trial comes they will appeal to this best within themselves, summon up all of it they can, hold firmly on to it, and strive steadfastly on in the sure and certain faith that what is best must in the end inevitably prevail.

Thus shall we pray. But will our prayers be answered? Will the individual be able to feel that he is cared for and regarded? When God was conceived of as a Father in Heaven, it was possible for the individual to believe that when he was in danger, or in adversity or depressed, this Father above would shield and protect, pity and console him. But can he have any such

comfortable assurance of being watched over and shielded when God is conceived of as the Mutual Influence operating between the individuals themselves? I believe that he can; and I believe that he will find the assurance much more dependable and much more open to proof and test. The individual can prove for himself that the Heart of Things is a feeling heart and feels for him.

England is no separate person apart from Englishmen. It is no Father in Heaven. It is merely the Spirit resident in and emanating from all Englishmen, as, in the present conception, God is the Spirit resident in and emanating from all individuals in the Universe. Yet an individual Englishman or Englishwoman or English child can feel that England cares for and regards him or her as a father would his child. We can see the proof of this at any moment. A strong, healthy young man will feel, as surely as he has felt anything in his life, that England expects him to do his duty and fight her enemies, and that she will praise him if he responds to her call and condemn if he shirks. A woman will similarly feel that England expects her to aid and succour in every way she can those who go to fight her country's battles. And he who has gone to the war will still feel England regarding him, expecting him to keep his body sound, his head

cool, his nerves steady, his faculties at concert-pitch, so that he may be at his fittest at every point when the supreme effort has to be made. And when that moment comes he will find her expecting him to exert himself to the last drain of his strength, and, in the extreme resort, to sacrifice his life itself for her sake. All this, the individual feels, is expected of him, and he knows that if he fails in nerve, in judgment, or in courage, he will be strictly condemned. Yet he knows also that if he fulfils these expectations, and if he behaves as a hero, nothing can exceed the love and admiration which England will bestow upon him ; that if he is wounded she will show the tenderest pity and compassion for him ; and that if he falls, a wave of sympathy will go out from England to those nearest him, and his name will be honoured by Englishmen to come. The individual can therefore feel that he is regarded, cared for, and, if he deserves it, loved by England. And in a lesser degree it is the same in peace as in war. Then, also, the Englishman knows that England is expecting him to give a good account of himself and make proper use of his capacities, his position, or his possessions ; and that she will condemn him if he leads an idle, purposeless existence without doing any good for his country. Children also are looked after by England, who

sees that they are properly educated and fed. And the old and destitute are provided for by her, the sick are treated and the stricken supported. At all times, therefore, in peace and in war, in childhood and in old age, in sickness and in health, an individual Englishman may directly experience the care and even love with which England regards him, and he may prove for himself that this care and love which England bestows upon the individual is a downright fact of practical experience as truly real as anything in the world, though England is no living, tangible person, but only the abstract personification of the Spirit which animates all Englishmen.

In precisely the same way any individual human being may feel that he is regarded and cared for by that Power which springs from all individual units in the Universe in their Mutual Influence upon one another. As resident in Nature, this Power is ever acting upon the individual and demanding of him that he shall conform to the laws of Nature, visiting him with inevitable punishment if he disregards them, and richly rewarding him if he obeys them and learns to understand and utilise them. And, as resident in Man, this same Power demands of the individual that he shall make the most of himself, and make the most of himself as a social individual and

member of a common humanity; and, in so far as he does his utmost, the individual will feel himself encouraged and stimulated by this common spirit of humanity. He will feel a subtle influence about him requiring of him that as long as he is fit and capable he should work to his full, rewarding him with a sense of satisfaction when he has done his best, and filling him with uneasy discontent when his efforts are slack. Yet this Power is not only the stern taskmaster, the relentless punisher of evil, the mechanical rewarder of good. It is also merciful when mercy is due. And when a man is down through no fault of his own, when some great sorrow has striken him, when some accident has befallen him, when through age or infirmity or illness his faculties and capacities have failed him, then he will have practical witness of the merciful nature of this Power in the strength of the loving arms which his fellow men and women will stretch forward to upraise and sustain him. If he is struck down in the street, or thrown into the sea, or overcome by pestilence or natural disaster, then it does not matter what his country, or his colour, or his creed is, but simply because he is a fellow human being, men and women will rush to help him, and will even risk their own lives that his, a stranger's, may be saved. When

wounded on the battlefield, even his enemies will succour him.

And this Power not only shows Mercy : it is also capable of Love. She or he who shows love for his fellow men and women by devoting the energies of his life for their good will find—in the end—if his love is genuine, single-minded, and whole-hearted, that that love comes back a hundredfold. Florence Nightingale is a testimony to this. She gave, without hope or expectation of return, and out of the simple fulness of her heart. But she received from thousands of those who never knew her, but who represented the general heart of mankind, a love which directly proves that in the Power to which the Mutual Influence of individuals upon another gives rise is something which can really love the individual.

So the individual may have confidence that God, as herein conceived, though He may be no separate Person but only the personification of the Spirit which animates all individuals as members of a Whole, does, in truth, regard, care for, and even love him, and is therefore something in which he may place his faith and hope and trust, and love as surely as he would love his country.

When, in presence of adversity, he prays to all the spirit in himself to help him face the worst

without a wince or whimper, and when, tautening himself for action, he presents an indomitable front to the world, he will find in the subtle influences around him sympathy pouring in upon him from every side and renewing the strength within him. And when in his keen anxiety to be of use, to do some good in the world, and be able to feel that his life has been justified and his being fulfilled, he freely opens himself to the World-Spirit, imbibes into himself all of its influence he can, and then, tightly collecting and retaining this, resolutely determines to achieve the best, he will feel himself within the rush of those fountain-springs which brought him hither and are ever seething on through him to something higher yet. And the nearer his prayers and aspirations have approached to the highest, the more nearly will he come within the central impetus of things, and the more certain will he be of receiving all, and more than all, of that strength he so much needs and of that re-vivifying force which will so surely strain him upward.

And men feel the need of worship as well as of prayer. More especially do they feel the need of collective worship; for it gives a tangible impression of unity and a solid reinforcement of their sense of union with their fellows in a

compact and living whole. And the effect upon a man of the direct personal influence of his fellows and their high expectations of him stimulates him and forces into being all the best that has lain latent. Men want to give expression to the unity they feel and would emphasise, and to voice their souls' yearning to reach the best. They want, too, opportunities for together expressing their admiration of great deeds and of noble men. They would glorify the deeds and worship the men who did them ; and not only the deeds and the men, but the ideals which inspired the men and which they would desire to see built into the very fabric of the race. Such worship expands men's souls. They love to see and admire those who have done what they themselves have at least dreamed of, and they like to know what are the ideals which the best among them think worthy ideals. And when it is men fitted to appreciate true worth and to differentiate it from false who accord their admiration, then such admiration is a real reward to the men who have done the deeds and a quickening stimulus to those who at least cherish the ideals.

The old family prayer and worship before the day's work began ; the prayer and worship before each sitting of Parliament ; and the gathering of people in churches on solemn occa-

sions : all have great value, for they preserve and emphasise the feeling of unity and the earnest and real desire there is in men to act up to the best. In the strain of action they have to dwell more upon their differences, and often to defend them vigorously and attack their neighbours. And in the rough business of life their highest desires are often smothered over and forgotten. It is comforting, therefore, and of high use to men, to be continually reminded in public worship of the unity which underlies their differences and of the ideals which stand before all their actions.

The old forms by which this was accomplished are now less effective than before. But this human need for collective prayer and worship remains, and in the tenser life on which we are entering will be more pressing than ever before. To steady their nerves, to preserve their sense of proportion, to keep in touch with the inner spring of things, to maintain their ideals, to emphasise the sense of unity, the assembling of men together for public worship will be found an increasingly necessary feature of life. We may expect therefore, that, if the old forms are now ineffectual for their purpose, new and more effective will be introduced and better means will be found for the expression of so urgent a need. Prayers more appropriate to a stalwart and confident age will

be said. Hymns and music breathing a larger, nobler, more hopeful and generous spirit will be composed. The writings of our own great men, and of our own times, and not only the writings of men of a distant country and of a remote age, will be read. And living personalities will deliver their own thoughts applied to present-day actualities, and be influenced not so much by the traditions of the past as by the needs and ideals of the future.

CHAPTER X

RECAPITULATION

Now that the grounds for the position I would wish to establish have been given and some of its implications stated, I would wish, for the sake of clearness, to recapitulate the position itself.

In every country and in all times the generality of men have felt themselves subject to an Unseen Power which they have believed to lie outside of themselves, and to be exercised by a Personal Being, or God, living in the Heavens.

The view I am setting forward is that the Power to which any individual man is subjected is not exercised by any separate Personal Being wholly outside men, but is what results from the Mutual Influence of all men, and of all the component parts of the Universe, however small they may be, upon one another ; and which these units are able to exert because they all, whether atoms or men, are self-active individuals with properties and characteristics of their own.

The Universe would be regarded as knit together

in one Whole, outside of which there is nothing, neither God, nor Devil, nor Nature, nor anything else. And we ourselves would be counted as part and parcel of that Whole. Each part, whether it be an ultimate particle of matter or the noblest man, exerts an influence upon and is influenced by every other part. And the Power which the Mutual Influence of all these parts exerts upon one another is that Power which men, with their instinct for personification, have personified as God. I would therefore look upon this Power not as being exercised by any external Personal Being, but as something springing up from within, and exerted by men themselves, and by every other particle of the Universe. I would also regard it as something which men are continually helping to make, and which is continually contributing to the making of men—as something which is ever growing, which men can and do help in fashioning, and which it is their highest duty to make as worthy and effective for the good as they can possibly make it.

To illustrate this position the case of "France" may be taken. We speak of France as if she were a person. We make statues and pictures of her. We talk of the sons of France, of Frenchmen loving her, and of her loving Frenchmen. Yet we know that there is really no such separate

Being. We recognise that France is in reality only the spirit acting in all Frenchmen. But we know too that this spirit goes to make up Frenchmen, as Frenchmen go to make up the spirit. We know that it is both immanent in and emanating from all Frenchmen—that it is the Mutual Influence of all Frenchmen, both past and present, upon one another, transcendent to any single Frenchman, but immanent in all. We know that it has changed and grown since Frenchmen first came into existence. And we know that it will change and grow in future, and for better or worse, according to the goodness or badness of the activities of individual Frenchmen. France is a spiritual Power of great potency, and exerts a profound influence upon any single individual Frenchman, and would still exist if any particular Frenchman ceased to exist. Yet if all Frenchmen died, France also would cease to exist. France, therefore, is certainly a Spiritual Power which unmistakably affects the lives of individual Frenchmen, and yet it is built up by Frenchmen and could not exist without them. It is not, therefore, a separate Being or Person over against, apart, and separate from all Frenchmen.

In the same way do I regard the Universal Spirit, the World-Soul. We may personify under the name of "God" this Spirit which makes for

the Good, but which really results from the mutual activities of individuals, just as we personify under the name "France" the spirit which makes France, but which really results from the mutual activities of individual Frenchmen. But we know all the time that it is not a separate Person any more than France is a separate Person, but only the Spirit engendered by the Mutual Influence of all the diverse constituent parts of the Universe upon one another—something which we ourselves help to make—something which will tend to become better or worse according as we play our parts well or ill—something which will endure after we particular individuals have died, but which would no longer have being if by any possibility every man and woman and every particle of the Universe could cease to exist.

In this view things do not consist of God, Man, and Matter, each separate and distinct from the other. They form rather one single, interconnected, and intimately related Whole : a Whole which is in Process, in Process of Betterment, and which is animated by a Spirit issuing from the parts, but which in turn fashions and moulds them, making and remaking the same material over and over again, but itself enduring continuously and being continually bettered.

So that a man, while feeling the Unseen Power unceasingly affecting him, may also feel that he can himself contribute to the formation and betterment of this Power, as he may contribute to the formation and betterment of public opinion. And he will realise a double truth of profound importance. He will recognise that while he is infused through and through by this Unseen Power and swept along in its overwhelming might; and while it is meet and right that he should *let* himself be thus carried along and should utterly resign and surrender himself to its good influence, it is also necessary that in the very midst of the rush and current he should retain his own individuality, recognise his responsibility for his own actions, and completely and absolutely rely upon himself and upon himself alone. It is a paradoxical truth most difficult to understand. But it is the very foundation principle and ultimate mainspring of all religion and morality; and upon our comprehension of it depends our whole attitude to life and the complexion of all our actions. If we *only* resign ourselves humbly to the Power, as weak men resign themselves to the force of public opinion—if we let ourselves drift along the current in sheer laziness and impotence, we shall soon find ourselves stranded, a useless, worthless

wreckage by the shore. Or if again we chill and harden ourselves and crust ourselves over with a shell of self-satisfaction, disdainful of the world's influence around us, we shall soon be sinking to the bottom with nothing to uphold us. But if we can strike a true mean—or rather if we can *both* be expansive and openly receptive to the inrush and onrush of the great Universal Spirit and *also* be firmly reliant upon ourselves—then indeed we shall have attained the sublimest harmony of life. An example will clear this point.

A patriot gladly opens his heart and makes himself receptive to every patriotic influence; he yields himself most willingly to the love of country and lets himself be borne along on the great waves of patriotism which surge within and around him. He will cultivate this love of country, fill himself with it, and feel he can never have too much. And yet—and this is the point—he will know that filling himself with patriotic feeling and love of country is not *enough.* Action is required; and for action it is upon himself *alone* that he must rely. And here is where the double truth will begin to reveal itself. He may fill himself with the spirit of his country, feel himself at one with all his countrymen and impelled with them in one common mighty impulse making for his country's good. But when the moment for

definite action comes he will know that he must rely upon his individual self alone, that he must collect himself together, get himself firmly in hand, keep his feet secure, his body sound, his nerves steady, his head clear, and for this reason, that he will know that he will be constantly having to make his choice from among innumerable alternatives which are ever opening up before him, and that upon the wisdom of his choice and upon his capacity for effectively pursuing the course he chooses will depend the amount of good he can do his country.

He will find no such person as "England" or "France" to choose for him : he must make the choice for himself ; and no outside Power can fit him for his country's service if he will not fit himself. He will rightly fill himself to his full with love of country, but when it comes to practical action he will realise that he will have to choose for himself from among innumerable alternatives how he will best serve her, whether in the Navy, or Army, or Civil Service, in politics, or in literature, at home or abroad, in the study or in the field. And, having made his choice, he will have to fit himself—with the aid, indeed, of others, but by his own individual exertions—physically, mentally, and morally for serving his country to her best advantage along the line he

has himself chosen. And so carefully must he preserve his individuality, his sense of responsibility and his freedom, that he must be ready, for his country's good, to alter her course at any moment if he thinks that course is wrong. Wholeheartedly, therefore, as he lets himself be carried along by his love of country, he has also and all the time to keep his wits about him and his judgment unclouded, so that the impetus which he individually gives to the whole general movement may always be in the right direction.

Lord Roberts, for example, was filled, and constantly filled himself, with deep love of country. He willingly surrendered all his life to this great love and let himself be impelled by it in his every action. And yet, at the same time, he kept himself ever taut and collected. He preserved a wonderful freedom. His sense of responsibility never for a moment left him. He knew that for his country's good it was of all things necessary that he should rely upon himself and not merely on fervent patriotic feeling, however good. And when his clear judgment saw that his country was moving in a wrong direction, he put forth all his might to change her course. He never doubted that there was that in the spirit of his country which made constantly for the good; and he inhaled into himself all he could of that

British spirit. But he knew too that on himself individually rested the responsibility for making the good; he fitted himself to make it, and he resolutely made it. He was a living example of the paradoxical truth that, on the one hand, we have to merge ourselves in the whole, open ourselves to the inflow of the main current and let ourselves be carried forward in utter faith that we are being propelled toward what is good; and that, on the other hand, we have to rely upon our own individual selves alone to ensure that the best is achieved. And neither attitude without the other will suffice. Lord Roberts with only his individual qualities and without the impulse of patriotic feeling would not have been the great man he was. And with *only* patriotic feeling and no self-reliance or sense of personal responsibility he would never have been able to accomplish for his country what his love for it insistently impelled him to do. It was in the combination of expanding love of country and concentrated individuality that his excellence lay.

So is it with regard to the individual and the World-Soul. He will let the Unseen Power exercise its fullest influence upon him, and will welcome it because of his faith that it makes for the good. He will freely open himself to the

inflow of the Universal Spirit; throw wide his arms and embrace all of it he can, and gladly let himself be carried along in its mighty surge. He will be filled with this love of God as with love of country. Yet he will never, in the moments of completest surrender and resignation, entirely lose hold of his own will and individuality, or divest himself of his own responsibility. Rather will he, after replenishing his strength, collect his judgment, control his will, assert his freedom, and exercise all his wisdom to choose the best of the many courses which always lie open before him, expecting no other, on or above the earth, to make the choice for him, but recognising his own responsibility in the matter, and his responsibility also for fitting himself to pursue with success the course he chooses.

As with patriotism of country, so, too, is it with that Patriotism of Humanity or Universal Love to which love of country finally deepens, and by which it is also inspired and uplifted: the more a man is filled with Universal Love, the more anxious is he to fit himself for the service of his fellows and the more insistently he reaches forward, and gives all his very best for those who follow after. And as love of country overcomes all desire for self-survival, overrides all love even of

the most dear, and sacrifices love and life and everything for country's sake, so will that deepest and widest Patriotism which embraces all Humanity, and is rooted in the Universe itself, sacrifice all in order that the highest good may live. Frenchmen love France, but we believe that their love of country is so deep as to merge itself in this larger patriotism and make them willing to sacrifice even their country so that those highest things of all for which they stand—Love of Truth, and Love of Beauty, and Love of Love—may survive, and may survive in their full perfection, as the imperishable and priceless treasures of mankind.

The mere thought that we are bound together in a whole and mutually influence each other, so that our actions for good or bad bring weal or woe to those around us, is enough, in itself, to make most men desire that their own influence, for what it is worth, should be on the side of the good. But those who have in any true degree a sense of having sprung from the very Earth, of being related with all living things, and intimately united with the whole World-Process, will be imbued with a Universal Love which will make them go a step further yet. They will reach forward to the best there is; they will strive to make themselves the best they can be; and this

best they will freely give for the good of their fellow-men, that those who follow after may be better still. Recognising that there is nothing in the Universe to prevent the best being eventually attained by those children of the future whom they are now helping to create, and knowing that the whole impulse of things is propelling them to the good, they will strive for the welfare of generations to come, and will want no other satisfaction than this—that in their day and according to their light they have done their best.

We set out by showing that men have always and everywhere believed themselves to be under the influence of some Invisible Power, and we have found that it really is the case that a man is affected at every moment of his life and in every detail of his actions by a Power immeasurably stronger than himself. But if we have been right in our conclusion that this Unseen Power which men feel is not the Hand of an Almighty God resident in the distant Heavens, but is an influence issuing from men themselves, from the Earth from which they sprung, and from the whole Universe of which the Earth and men are only a part, then the individual's whole attitude to things must alter. He would still and always acknowledge and welcome, seek after and draw into himself all of

this Unseen Power he can ; but instead of expecting it to do everything for him, to provide for his needs, to guide his footsteps, to guard him from danger, to comfort him in distress, he would, when the moment for action arrived, look to himself alone. He would do what Nelson did in practice. He would *before* action fill himself with the Spirit, but *in* action rely wholly on himself. And he would rely with confidence on himself, because he would recognise that he was borne up from within by a Spirit whose essence is good.

He will not, when undertaking a dangerous enterprise, or when faced with the terrible complexities of ordinary life, tend to *lean* on an outside Father, Guardian, and Protector, and attribute to him the credit if success comes, and, if failure results, console himself with the belief that the all-wise and all-powerful Father has ordered everything for his true best. He will recognise that he is possessed of certain qualities, capacities, and faculties of his own, and that he is subject to certain external influences, physical and human, and he will rely upon himself to make the most and the best of what is in him, to subdue and suppress what is bad, to tend and foster what is good ; and among the influences which are ever pouring in upon him from every side to resist those which are harmful, and to welcome

and embrace those which impel him toward the good. He will do more. He will assume the initiative and go out and seek for those influences of which he stands most in need. So, realising that he is upheld by the whole good spirit of the Universe, but that in action it is upon himself alone that he must rely, he will brace up all his faculties, summon every reserve of strength, and call to his aid every favourable influence of nature and of man he can net within his reach ; and, not expecting to be continually being shown the way and having his footsteps planted, will advance fearlessly forward, ready, indeed, to accept risks and dangers, and expecting many a downfall ; but confident that he has that around him and within which will carry him through all his difficulties to whatever he shall choose shall be his goal—provided only that it is good.

Men, instead of regarding themselves and all the forces of Nature as being under the direction of and manipulated by some external Being as separate and distinct a Person from themselves as a father is from his children, and instead of having therefore to rely upon this Father and to expect to be guided and governed by him, will recognise that no such Being external to the whole of men and to Nature exists, and will rely rather upon the Power within themselves. Mankind will not have

to reckon on a Being who may use the forces of Nature to thwart their endeavours, for their own good perhaps, yet in a way beyond their calculations, but will depend upon themselves alone to protect themselves from and eventually to master the natural forces.

When overtaken by some great natural catastrophe a man will not therefore humble himself before an Almighty Being in whose hands he thinks his destinies lie ; distrust himself ; acknowledge his own helplessness and dependence ; admit his unworthiness and, maybe, sinfulness ; bow before the punishment he has deserved ; recognise the vanity of his own futile pretensions in the presence of One who rules the Universe and has all Nature under his control ; and humbly beg this All-Powerful Being to avert calamities and dangers from him and from those he cares for. He will, on the contrary, rely upon that strength and capacity of which he is inherently possessed, and upon that Power springing up from within all Nature and working within him and within his fellows, and steadily making, as experience shows, for better and still better things. When calamities of Nature befall him he will utilise his best faculties to discover what causes these misfortunes and how he may avoid them in future. When the failure of the rainfall brings about a famine, he will

exert himself to transport food into the stricken area, to dig canals which will furnish water when the rainfall is again deficient, and to build railways that will render the carriage of food from unaffected districts cheaper and easier. When an earthquake destroys a town he will rebuild it, as the Americans have rebuilt San Francisco, on securer lines and with ampler precautions. Finally, when, in face of the extraordinary complexities and intricate difficulties of life, he has to choose a course, he will not look for his sole guidance to what some outside all-wise Being is supposed to have said to men living thousands of years ago in conditions wholly different from the present. He will, indeed, be guided by the experience of the past and by wisdom which has undergone the test of time, but he will rely upon himself to form his own conclusions and to make out his own line. And he will remember that the conditions of the past no longer exist in the present, and that what he has to consider are the conditions which ought to prevail in the future. In such ways as these will men, confiding in the Universal Soul which animates them all, trust in themselves in action, feel their own responsibility, and depend upon their own resources.

And if any man think that he is too frail and

weak to face by himself the formidable difficulties and bitter trials with which he is confronted, he may receive confidence from the reflection that he does not stand alone in solitary isolation, for in the whole Universe no individual, be that individual atom or man, is for a single moment ever really isolated, but is connected and interrelated with all other individuals in the entire Universe, atoms as well as men, and forms a part of one stupendous Whole—a Whole which, by the interaction of its parts upon one another, is, in our experience over many years, making for the good. When, then, an individual summons up the best within him, clearly thinks out what is his right course to pursue, and then, tightly clutching what he has gathered up, strives to achieve the best he can, he may have this to comfort and support him, that he will have the sum total of the forces of the Universe working on his side.

In making for what after the most searching examination he honestly and conscientiously believes to be the best, he may be certain that he will have helped the good to prevail. He may, therefore, pursue his task, or face the difficulties before him, with the same confidence as that man has who believes that there is a God in Heaven who is peculiarly interested in his particular doings, but with less chance of mental confusion when the

discovery is made that no such Person separate and distinct from himself exists, but that the Unseen Power on which he has relied is a Spirit working within ourselves, welling up from the deep interior of things, uniting us all in a living, loving, moving whole, and ever impelling us surely upward. And it is because we are animated by such a spirit, which not only unites us to our fellows but urges us toward the good, that we may with such confidence rely upon ourselves in action.

We shall still trust in God—and more than ever. But, as we say indifferently "Thank God" or "Thank goodness"; so, when we speak of trust in God we will mean trust in the essential Goodness of Things. We shall trust ourselves and trust our fellows, have faith in the fundamental goodness of human nature, and firmly hold that in the world it is the good that finally gets the better of evil.

And the world we shall regard as a bubbling spring, and we ourselves as the latest bubbles which have come to the surface—but as a spring with this peculiar property, that it purifies itself in the process of bubbling. Murky it may have been in the origin, but by virtue of this precious property inherent in its very nature it would eventually clear itself—and not only purify itself

till it was clear as crystal, but elate itself till it became as exhilarating as a love elixir. This would be the marvellous nature of the Spiritual Spring. And it would have one more characteristic—and the most important : that the purification would be effected by the deliberate exertions of the bubbles themselves. As, impelled by the inner impetus of things, they came seething to the surface, they would, from a deep necessity of their nature, exert themselves to purify the whole in which they lived and moved and had their being ; and it would be by the exertions of these individuals, and through nothing else, that the character of the whole in time became purer, clearer, lighter, and more radiantly intense.

To many this change from the old idea that we are under the guidance of a Merciful Father who will do all for our best, to the new idea that in action we must depend upon ourselves, will bring only distress. They will even think it profane and impious, and will consider those who propose any such change as fundamentally wicked. And many who make it will miss the soothing solace of the old ideas and will look back with pangs of regret to many sweet memories of church services and hymns and ceremonials. Those who make a break, even if it is for the good, always

suffer most. And those who no longer hold the immature beliefs in which they were brought up, will miss with many a sigh the comfortable words of their childhood. But with future generations it will not be so. When the generality of men have absorbed into their minds what has long been in the minds of great thinkers, that the Power which so influences their lives is within the world and within themselves, and that it is on themselves therefore that they must rely ; when this idea has saturated the literature, the music, the art, the hymns, the prayers of the people, and when the whole atmosphere in which they are brought up is one of reliance of men on themselves, of faith in the Spirit within them and of pride in a destiny which lies in their own keeping, then men will no longer feel the need of the comfort which belief that they are shielded and nurtured by some invisible God affords. They will feel erect and self-supporting, and by a greater reliance on themselves they will have acquired that firmness of purpose so necessary for great achievements, and that strength of character without which it would be impossible to bear the burden of responsibility which the new freedom will entail.

But because they will be self-reliant and because they will have pride in the great future they see

their way to make, it need not be feared that they will necessarily be arrogant, assertive, and rude. They may, on the contrary, with all this self-reliance, have that quality of humility which comes with the knowledge the strongest and most capable man has, that after he has achieved his very utmost there still remains an infinity of good to do. Bowed humility also and a reverence which forbids the utterance of a single word will they feel in the presence of that commingled Love and Beauty which is to us the most Holy and the most truly Divine.

And as individual men and women become increasingly aware of their oneness with the Universe, as they really feel themselves part of the World-Process, as they are more and more animated by its Spirit and swept along in its upward urge, they will also, by yet one more of those curious paradoxes which abound in the world, feel themselves firmer on their own legs and more conscious of the amount that still lies in their own hands and depends upon their own wills. They will be caught up in the rush of the Universal Spirit and be filled with a love of their kind which will cause them, with something like maternal instinct, to stretch far forward and sacrifice the best that they can make themselves, for the good of the future it is their part to create.

But the greater the love the more vividly will they realise both the number of alternatives which lie open before them, and their responsibility for choosing only that one which will produce the unquestionably best for those who follow after ; and the more earnestly, therefore, will they fit themselves for the creation of this single best alone.

So the sum of it is that that most important thing in a man—his root attitude of mind, will not be the attitude of one who was born bad and who could only expect to suffer the inevitable consequences of his sins unless he were saved from them by some intercessor from beyond. It will be the attitude of one who believes that he and his neighbours were born more good than bad. He will not therefore despise and disparage himself and his fellows under the belief that he and they are inherently wicked. He may wonder at the bad in the best, but he will marvel still more at the good in the worst, and more yet at the great total of good even this earth contains. And of this he will become increasingly assured—that running through all, through the worst as through the best, is a decisive something which is ever driving the good to overcome and melt and transmute the bad. So he will firmly believe in the good, have faith in himself and his fellows, be

ever his own true self and steadfastly work that the best alone may prevail.

Then sometimes, even here and now, will come to him the feeling of Heaven, and with it the longing that he may so do that his children and his children's children may experience it more fully and more often in the goodly years that we must *make*.

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